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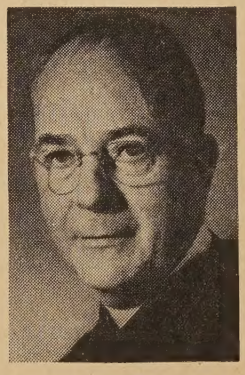
A Journal of Contemporary Preaching



Douglas Horton:

Revived Interest In Religion

Nels F. S. Ferré • *David A. MacLennan*

Herbert Gezork • *Benjamin E. Mays*

Gerald Kennedy • *Albert McCartney*

Ralph W. Loew • *Robert J. McCracken*

Ralph W. Sockman

Sermons Delivered at
THE CHICAGO SUNDAY EVENING CLUB

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CONTENTS: JANUARY 1957

SERMONS

'Awake the Dawn!' ..... *Gerald Kennedy* 8
Can We Still Believe in a God of Love? ..... *Herbert Gezork* 12
The Tragedy of a Good Word ..... *Ralph W. Loew* 14
Personal Call from Long Distance ..... *David A. MacLennan* 17
When Christ Becomes Real ..... *Robert J. McCracken* 20
Love's Double Duty ..... *Ralph W. Sockman* 23
The Choice Before Us ..... *Nels F. S. Ferré* 26
The Road to Blessed Immortality ..... *Benjamin E. Mays* 30
Changing Outlooks for Religion ..... *Albert McCartney* 32

ARTICLES

The Revival of Interest in Religion ..... *Douglas Horton* 4
Protestantism and Art ..... *Alvin Schutmaat* 38

FEATURES

Book Reviews 42
Children's Sermon 29
Hymn 37
Memo 3
Nota Bene 46
Poetry 7
Prayers 11, 37
Pulpit Calendar 2
Pulpit Patter 40
Pulpit Post 47

Pulpit Calendar

Jan. 1—New Year's Day.
Jan. 6—Epiphany.
Jan. 6-13—Universal Week of Prayer.
Jan. 13—1st Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 20—Missionary Day.
Jan. 20-26—Church and Economic Life Week.
Jan. 27—3rd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 27-Feb. 3—Youth Week.
Feb. 3—4th Sunday after Epiphany.
Feb. 10—Race Relations Sunday.
Feb. 17—Universal Day of Prayer for Students.
Feb. 17-24—Brotherhood Week.
Feb. 24—7th Sunday after Epiphany.
Mar. 3—The Transfiguration (also Aug. 6).
Mar. 6—Ash Wednesday.
Mar. 8—World Day of Prayer.
Mar. 10—1st Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 17—2nd Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 24—3rd Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 25—The Annunciation.
Mar. 31—4th Sunday in Lent.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

VOLUME XXVIII JANUARY 1957 No. 1

Memo:

MAYBE it is the rustle and rush of Christmas that is all around at this writing; maybe it is being back home after a long time away; maybe it is the bonus soft, sunny day nobody expected in a Chicago December; maybe it is just glands and enzymes and things—somapsychotics. Anyway, I sit down to my Memo in a comparative mush. There are those who suppose that an inky blend of vitriol and gall races in an editor's veins, and sometimes it may. But today a thick Sucaryl syrup is circling sluggishly in mine.

It began yesterday in church when I sat with the home-town congregation an itinerant preacher gets to join all too rarely. Home happens to be a well-heeled village with some simple dwellings over on our side of the track—for community conscience' sake—but with blocks and blocks of far more stately mansions for the better- to best-heeled set. This means that the congregation is a sensualist's delight: the rich sight and sound and smell of it. There are furs you almost *have* to touch. And tiny feathered hats your wife would know better than even to go in to price. And exquisitely simple dresses whispering the tasteful security of conspicuous consumption, as does all the lean Ivy League look on the men. And, soft in the aisle, shoes with fair leathers worked like cloth. And rich scents on the hushed air.

Now the easy thing, maybe the editorial thing, would have been to wax furious in the thoughts about all this deep-pile elegance. You could remember Isaiah and his fulminations against female gewgaws: not much tinkling and practically no nose-rings in Winnetka, but the idea might be stretched to cover. Such prophetic utterance, even only in the mind, would have the full resonance and the fine timbre of righteousness or, anyway, blue serge self-righteousness. I suppose if I dug deep enough in my barrel I'd find vintage sermons showing strains of such facile indignation.

But I hope not. Because it is embarrassing how much such prophetic strong meat looks like sour grapes from a distance—or from a pew. Church people are not the exhibitionists some of our shallower proclamations suggest they are. They dress as well as they can, not to show off, but out of that joy of living which no Christian need justify, out of pleasure in created beauty, out of respect for their fellows and, above all, to honor God. There is real religious validity in every man's determination to come to worship in his best. In our dressing up there is enough danger of ostentation to keep a certain tension in all our attitudes on the subject. But in dressing down there would be quite as destructive a danger of hypocrisy. The Pharisee's sin, you know, was not conspicuous consumption but conspicuous non-consumption.

So please, prophets, let's lay off the Easter parade whenever it comes up. There will always be silly creatures, of course, who lose no chance to exalt their own fading glory, to gild the wilting lily. But even for them, is not the pastoral prescription more sympathy than Jovian thunderbolts? Is there not a kind of obeisance before the Creator—dumb, awkward, blind obeisance, to be sure—in anybody's attempt to preserve and enhance such beauty as is given, even when he seems oblivious to the Giver?

The fact is that most of the people who hear the preacher sounding off about vanity could not agree more. And all, I hope, will be dressed to the teeth. But the preacher's cheap point will sail right by them because deep down they know they are not so much selfishly engaged in the rites of sophistication as they are naively participating in the rituals of worship, coming before their God the way most peoples have from the beginning, adorned as is proper to those sensible of the privilege, humble where humility counts most, in the vital centers of their being.

•

This weather really must have me—Easter talk in December! But you go awfully soft on a congregation when you sit where they sit. Every preacher ought to sit there always in imagination, but that can never be quite the same as in person.

You know just how melted I was on Sunday? I actually found myself questioning some of my own (and others') questioning of the "return to religion." Not really, maybe: it takes more than one Sabbath's euphoria to overlook some of the bogus pressures back of the fad, to forget some of the charlatans taking advantage of it. But step out of the abstract into a congregation; watch real people give themselves to worship; hear them pray and sing, not as a chorus responding to a preacher, but as individuals speaking for themselves; watch them hang on the sermon—and it is hard to be so snide. The clincher comes when I recall how regularly and how patiently and how seriously Christians assemble to hear their motives for assembly maligned. There is something very right underlying all that is wrong. I wonder: Am I soft in the head or just in the heart? Or belligerently bourgeois?

F. A. G.

A Challenge to Christian Laity in America Based on History of the Church

THE REVIVAL OF

THAT there is at present in this country a revival of interest in religion, who can doubt? This year, as in every year of recent times, more than a thousand books on religious subjects have been published in this country. This is by far the largest category in book publishing. Sunday schools had been shrinking until the middle thirties; they are now picking up additions every year. Church membership rolls have been expanding at an acceleration not known in American history until today. Attendance at church has improved in ratio to the increase in membership. Almost all theological seminaries for the training of ministers are bursting at their seams, Harvard Divinity School, for instance, being many times the size it was a few years ago. Religion on the campuses of every college and university I know is now *de rigueur:* the Harvard University Church—to use again an illustration from the university I know best—where many a vacant pew was seen but yesterday, is full to overflowing. Furthermore, the whole spectrum of American Protestantism is affected, from the theologically most conservative groups, whose tabernacles now rise almost everywhere on our landscape, to the most leftist churches, where the name of God is heard less than that of man. The so-called secular TV shows are positively astounding to anyone who can remember the religious atmosphere even of the forties; some of them start with the dizziest of choreography and end up with an evening hymn, and no one seems to feel any inconsistency.

History of Christian Movement

What are we to say? Is this, as I have conservatively called it, merely a revival of interest in religion, which will pass away as suddenly as it has come upon us; or is it a revival of religion itself, rooted in the reality of human life and therefore destined to be a creative element among us for a long time to come?

To answer this question, one must examine this revival with some care, comparing it with the revivals of authentic religion in the past. Since time will not permit us to examine all such revivals, I am going to take you back to the most important revival of all in the history of Western man. This in a true sense, cannot be called a revival, since it was an original development. It does serve, however, to measure all revivals since. I refer to the early development of Christianity.

You remember the story. The exciting, breathtaking, life-giving report about Christ was first whispered in the slums of Jerusalem and various villages in the Holy Land, then carried from city to city in the circle of lands about the Mediterranean until finally the whisper had grown to the exultant and commanding pean which shook the Roman Empire and wrested the power from paganism. This all happened with such relative speed that it leaves even the great historian Gibbon gasping.

Zealous Disciples

It is to that same historian that I want to take you because he lists what he considers to be the basic causes and concomitants of the early growth of Christianity. These we may properly take as touchstones against which to test the revival in our own day.

Gibbon first notes the *inflexible*, and if we may use the expression, the *intolerant zeal of the Christians.*

The danger to Christianity in that day was not that Christ would not survive in the memories and thoughts of men, but that he would be taken into the Pantheon and so become just one more god among many. This the Christians fought against to the last ounce of their energy, to the last drop of their blood in the arenas. The other gods might have some virtues—and who would say that they did not?—but to the Christians, Christ was supreme; He was the Son, the only Son, of God, sharing his throne with none other. As we look back now we see that it was this insistence alone which saved Christianity.

At first sight our situation in America appears quite different from that of ancient Rome. We do not seem to have any gods such as they had—Apollo, Minerva, Jupiter, Hera and the rest. This, however, is only a surface difference. Who would say that many of our people do not devote themselves to prosperity, health and the like? If we had been

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By Douglas Horton

INTEREST IN RELIGION

iving in the old Roman Empire, we should have given these interests of ours the names of gods—Fortuna, Sanitas and so forth. We do not name them so today, but it is undeniable that we give them as much time and attention as the old Romans gave their gods.

One Diety Among Many

The question before us, therefore, is similar to that which confronted the Roman Christian. Are we going to make Christ one deity among many, or is he to be supreme? Take the matter of your health, by way of illustration. If you realize that you are likely to feel better and be better if you think good thoughts, you are undoubtedly on the track of a great truth. But now suppose you take the thought of Christ into your mind just as a helpful medicine; then you are not making him supreme but only introducing him as a servant to your own interests in health. But now suppose you let the thought of him, upborne on your love for him, dominate your life, your plans, your hopes, whether or not, as it were, you are made healthy by this process. You will, of course, be brought into a condition where maximum health would be expected, but you have not taken Christ from his kingly position into that of a mere slave to your own interests. He is not one lesser god among many. If Christ dominates your motivation, you will be a healthier person; but that, paradoxically, does not make any difference.

One could speak similarly of our god of prosperity. Undoubtedly Christ cooperates with that god. In the long last, Christian honesty is the best business policy; but if a man should join a church in order to increase his income, he is obviously placing Christ among his Pantheon of gods in a subsidiary position.

In assessing the current interest in religion, therefore, we have to ask whether we are really putting Christ first with an inflexible and, if we may use the expression, intolerant zeal, or merely welcoming him as one among many concerns.

Doctrine of Immortality

The next mark and cause of the growth of early Christianity mentioned by the historian is the *doctrine of a future life.*

The Roman Empire was an enormous, sprawling multiplication of peoples. There were the peasants in every country, who tilled the land. There were the restless throngs in the cities, susceptible of being welded into a fearful social instrument by an unprincipled demagogue. There were the innumerable slaves, some of them well educated, some of them living the lives of cattle. They were all subjects of the emperor—subjects in the original meaning of the word, those who were thrown under his sway. They did not count as persons, but simply as more people.

Though our American empire no longer has in it any slaves of the kind well known in Rome, there are some similarities between it and the lands of the Caesars. The old Roman Empire was big: so are we. It was full of people who had little control over the making of the social policies which controlled their lives: the same becomes increasingly true of us as our life becomes (and how inevitably!) organized.

The doctrine of the future life did something for many a Roman which no other belief could do so well. It gave him a sense of his own importance. By it he acquired an inward dignity. St. Paul undoubtedly has this in mind when he speaks of "the power of the resurrection." The gist of the doctrine is that each person has a meaning, and that if anything finally causes his destruction, real meaning, true significance, is lost from the world.

Democratic Ideals

We are all aware that the doctrine of the future life is sometimes parodied as hope for pie in the sky by and by. It is thought by some to be a psychological emollient for those who have to endure situations of difficulty and injustice in this life. It is thought to be the means whereby an oppressor may continue his oppressions. Historically, however, at least in Britain and America, it has not worked out that way. When our fathers, after the Reformation, realized that the eternal God had called them with an eternal calling, it made them more effective persons in this world here and now. The Catholic historian Christopher Dawson is my authority for saying that democracy, which is a political system that dignifies the individual by giving him a vote, came into being in its Western form as a result of the beliefs of people who gathered in their little conventicles in London in the wake of the Reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries. They could not believe that God had called them to sonship and all that that implied, without also believing that the state was duty-bound to call them into citizenship and all that that implied. It was on the basis of their felt dignity as immortal souls that they demanded the vote from the magistrate, and finally got it.

I shall not be worried lest the current revival of religion run soon into quicksands if I can know that our Christian people today have a firm hold on the truth that each one of them carries in his heart a fragment of God's eternal purpose; that each one was sent here with a duty to fulfill; that each one, in a word, may have the joys and responsibilities of an immortal soul. In a way, we may be able to gauge the strength of the contemporary religious upsurge if we know whether Americans take the future life seriously.

Christ—God's Miraculous Gift

Edward Gibbon, in the third place, notes as a cause of the growth of early Christianity the *miraculous powers* ascribed to the primitive church.

There is ground for dismissing this point out of hand, because Gibbon himself did not believe in miracles. I rather think that we might take a middle ground between Gibbon and the early church, saying with Gibbon that we do not believe in all the miracles which the early church undoubtedly accepted—such as the floating of the axe head. On the other hand—and this is of ultimate importance—we are ready to take sides, I hope, with the early church in accepting the fundamental miracle, the sending of Jesus Christ into the world to redeem it.

It is almost impossible for us to conceive of what life must have been like in the ancient world before the coming of the gospel. I remember, long ago when I was a young minister, preaching in a university chapel. In the course of my remarks I spoke of one of the heroic Greeks as having said, "I do not love the laws of man as much as I love the laws of the gods." An old man followed me out of the chapel, falling into conversation with me as we walked along. Presently he disclosed that he was a distinguished visiting lecturer from Cambridge University, England. Finally he said, "You won't mind my saying this, will you, but that heroic Greek could not have said that the laws of the gods could be loved. They did not love their gods, nor anything about them. They feared them. Before the Christian era you get virtually no intimation of the idea that God can be loved. That idea came in from Palestine. I am a teacher of Greek classics. I think I have read all of them, and I am quite sure I am telling you the truth."

Living Sermons

There is your miracle. God created a new something in human society through Christ. Undoubtedly before that time idealists, dreaming of the good, the true and the beautiful, conceived God or one of the gods as being willing to die for mankind. In the gospel, however, this tremendous fact took marketable shape. Just as it was possible to make steel in small quantities before the Bessemer and other processes were invented, so there were isolated hints of divine love in one place or another before the coming of Christ. By his life, death and resurrection, however, Christ revealed the character of God in a way that the human race has not been able to set aside or outgrow.

Our question, as we study the present revival interest in religion, is whether our people acce this miraculous gift of God and respond to it wi the dedicated enthusiasm worthy of it.

In the fourth place, our historian calls attenti to the *pure and austere morals* of the Christians.

The people of the Roman Empire were undoub edly like most people in most places, neither ve good nor very bad, but ready to follow middle-c the-road ethics, especially if this did not cost the very much. Now and then there would be a Cato a Seneca, a magnificent illustration of magnanimi and courage, but the people as a whole wou hardly be expected to aspire to such lofty heigh

In this environment there grew up little bands Christians who gathered round the table to cel brate God's coming into the world. He had n needed to come as he did. It was a costly expe ence. He would not have come had it not been f his love for mankind. That made the difference- and that made the difference with these peop Because they knew God loved them, they devot themselves in love to each other and to the worl "Behold how they love one another," it was said them. They out-thought, out-lived, and out-di others in the pagan world, says another historia This kind of living is the type of sermon that irresistible.

Measure of Contemporary Interest

What of today? Do we Christians of the chur stand out in the midst of our vast American empi as pure and austere in our morals? By pure a austere morals we cannot mean not smoking cig rettes, not beating our wives, or, indeed, anythi negative. The weeds in the garden break none the Ten Commandments. I am asking whether o American Christians are exciting, positive, ethic personalities.

Before the iron curtain clanged down, a you daughter of ours went to Russia to study co munist youth. Among other spots she visited w Stalingrad, which had become the symbol of Ru sia's doggedness and resistance during the wa Now that the war was over, however, the city ha become the sign of Russian rebirth, and you people from all over the country had come to he rebuild it. After a day of laying brick with a you girl who had given up her education in medici to contribute her aid to the new city, our daught asked her Russian companion how long she i tended to stay there. The girl looked at her in su prise. "Why," she said, "until Stalingrad is rebuilt Are many of our young Christians so devoti themselves to a city fairer than Stalingrad—t city of which St. John dreamed in the Apocalypse- that, if they were asked how long they are goi to keep up their efforts, they would reply, "Wh until the work is done"?

> Lone on the land and homeless on the water,
> Pass I in silence till the work be done.

So wrote Frederick William Henry Myers six years ago in his biographical poem, *St. Paul.* A our young people like that today? Or our old

ends? Some of them are, and they are the sign at the current religious interest may have body it, that it does not lack soul.

Christian Republic

Gibbon points finally to the *union and discipline the Christian republic* which gradually formed an dependent and increasing state in the heart of e Roman Empire.

There had been priesthoods everywhere in the cient days, there had been groups of devotees of rious demigods in all the various cities of the mpire; but because of the quality of the life and ath of Christ, an organization came into being together unique. The development of the church as indeed the wonder of the world.

The church was unique in its leadership. The rld had never before seen a Christian pastor. here had been priests in a thousand temples who w to it that the holy days were kept, the sacri- es performed, the offerings collected and the ildings kept in decent repair. The minister, how- er, was a new figure who, like his Master, went out doing good. He was, as St. Paul had said, ambassador, mediating the love of God to the eds of men.

The church was unique in its laity. The very rd "laity" is short for the phrase "the people of d." Where can you duplicate the story of this ligious movement which was engineered by a half zen fishermen and a few others? Where are other spels written by a tax collector, a secretary, a ctor and a member of the fishing industry as were atthew, Mark, Luke and John? Again, it was cause of the character of Christ's ministry and essage that a lay member could regard himself as lding responsibility in the church. The Lord rist had not set up any church government. He d not died for any ruling class. To him were be- lden all the people, rich and poor, bond and free. is saving grace, given to all, had produced a fra- rnity. This fraternity was a church not merely ministers but also of laymen.

Ministry and Laity

Now, watchman, what of the day? What does e church of 1956 offer in its ministry, and in its ty?

As we look at the ministry of today's church, I lieve that we may have some confidence that the rring of the religious spirit among us will persist. r the most part, our ministers know that the notional wave which has caught us all cannot be aintained unless there is added to the emotions e quality of a straight thinking. Good thought to a religious belief what bones are to the hand. rtunately, one seldom hears today that word of sterday, "I believe in religion but I don't believe theology." Theology is simply thinking about d, and the only cure for bad, stupid, stuffy theol- y—with which some of us have been acquainted is good theology. This our ministers, for the most rt, know; and we may expect from them the nd of teaching leadership that belongs to them.

My special hopes that the revival of interest in religion will continue and expand in the days to come lie in the new role the laity now seem to be taking. I am thinking not so much of their work inside the church as of their work as churchmen outside the church.

How many of you know of the Kirchentag movement in Germany which is now coming to make itself felt in various areas in this country? Kirchentag began as a great assembly of laymen brought together to study the Bible and to ask themselves what their jobs as lawyers, doctors, businessmen, laborers, are in the light of the gospel.

Kirchentag Movement

In 1951 the Kirchentag assembly was convened in the politically divided city of Berlin with this theme: "In spite of all, we are still brothers." Mass rallies were held alternately in the West sector and in the Communist-governed East sector. Along the streets still devastated by war and placarded with political slogans, these Christian laymen walking home from the meetings lifted up the refrain of Martin Luther's hymn "A mighty fortress is our God."

In 1954 the assembly was held in Leipzig. Altogether more than 650,000 persons of different social classes took part. Significant was not so much the fact that vast numbers were there; rather that they had come from far and near of their own accord and, undaunted by a week of pouring rain, sought an answer in prayer and Bible study to their political and economic perplexities.

[*In 1956 the Kirchentag held in Frankfurt included 21,000 East Germans among the half-million Christians attending. For a complete report see the* Christian Century *for September 26, 1956, page 1094.—Ed.*]

The interest of the laity is part of the present surge of religious concern in the United States. If you should ask me what single feature would be most likely to save the present stirring of the American heart from being a mere revival of interest in religion and make it a permanent revival of religion, I should say that it is the part that laymen and lay women will play.

The Three

WHO were the three that came, O Mary, late,
With dun cloaks over purple, stealthily
Flurried, yet ceremonious and sedate,
With soft old laughter and solemnity?
The gifts they brought, we hear, were whimsical,
Unseasonable to set before a child,
Objects out of a dream that might recall
Significations tender, noble, wild.
When those incredible old men had gone,
Leaving their Eastern fragrance on the dawn,
We heard strange rumors about priests and kings.
Whose was the will that let, or made, them come?
Why are your lips to our questions dumb,
And in your heart how dare you keep such things?

By Siegmund A. E. Betz.

'Awake the Dawn!'

By Gerald Kennedy

Psalm 57:8.

IF you read all of Psalm 57 you discover that here was a man in trouble. He had seen his enemies advance and prosper. Then one of those religious miracles took place—we never can quite explain how it happens. Somehow God grasped hold of this man's life, and he began to feel secure and safe and sure. Finally, in great exuberance his mood changed and he said, "I will awake the dawn." Now he did not say, "I'll wait for it." He said, "I'll do something to bring it about. I will hurry it. I will be the kind of a person that makes that new day appear." Either this is egotistical nonsense or he had something happen to him we would all like to have happen to us.

Darkness in Public Affairs

We live in a world where, if it is true that we can do something to hasten the new day, it is about the best news we can hear. To some extent our mood is like that of those sailors who went on board the target ships after the atomic explosions at Bikini. You remember they said, "Decks you can't stay on more than a few moments; water you can't drink; air you can't breathe without a gas mask; fish you can't eat. It's a fouled-up world." And indeed it is. But if it is possible for people, ordinary folk, to do something about bringing in a better day, that's a part of the good news we ought to hear. I want to talk about it for a few minutes.

Let me begin by saying this: If we have any doubts about a man's bringing in the dawn, we certainly can have no doubts that a man can bring the darkness. We have watched that happen in our time. Men have made great promises of a better day, and have made millions of people believe those promises, and then have brought upon the earth a darkness, not only upon their own people but upon all the world. I'm willing to believe tonight that some of those dictators may have meant well, but I suppose they were guilty of what Jesus called "the unforgivable sin." It is a darkness of mind that comes to men so that no longer can they tell the difference between the night and the day, th darkness and the light. It happens to a man whe he no longer can tell what will create goodness an what will cause evil. Such a man loses the ability t tell the difference between right and wrong.

In the early part of September 1955 I was i Germany. Along with Bishop Oxnam and Bisho Werner I was participating in a conference wit our Methodist chaplains of Europe. Bishop Oxnan said to me one day that he had gone into Berli shortly after the war was over as one of the firs civilians to enter Berlin. If any of you have been i that city since the war you know what a devastate wreck it is. One day a man who had been an exil from Hitler's Germany was showing the bisho about. Outside the ruined chancellery where s much of the devilment had been planned, this ma began to laugh. When the bishop asked him wha was funny about the devastation he said, "I ca remember standing right here and hearing Hitle say to a great crowd of cheering Germans, 'Give m ten years, and you'll never know Berlin.' " Indeed

But it is not only the dictators that bring thi about. The men who have no faith in the spirit als bring darkness upon the earth. The man who ha only a militaristic answer to our confusion, wh says that we can fight a preventive war, bring darkness. The man who cannot understand tha power, as we wield it, can prevent something hap pening, but can never construct something that i good and new, puts out the light soon or late.

Troubled Personal Relationships

A man has the power to bring darkness into hi relationships, and oftentimes he does it. I think o those fathers who come into their homes like a dar cloud. The children stop their play and the mothe looks worried. Whenever they appear a gloom set tles down upon the family. Or there is a man in a business organization who always brings a discordan note and upsets the plan and the dream of thos who would really construct a great enterprise Sometimes you find such a one in the church. Al ways against everything, he never brings a word o encouragement, and there is darkness wherever h goes. Men can bring the darkness into their persona relationships.

In South America, walking down the main stree of Montevideo one day, I stopped to look at a boo store window. In my feeble Spanish I tried to spel out the titles of some of the new books. *Esa Noch*

GERALD KENNEDY, *bishop of the Los Angeles area of the Methodist Church since 1952, became the youngest bishop of his church when he was elected and consecrated to that office in Seattle at the age of 40. A graduate of the College of the Pacific, of Pacific School of Religion and of Hartford Theological Seminary, he had held pastorates in Connecticut and California before he became minister for six years of St. Paul's Methodist Church in Lincoln, Nebraska. In December, Harper published Bishop Kennedy's twelfth book,* The Christian and His America.

Peron (That Night of Peron) was one. I had st come from Argentina, and I knew what that le meant: a dictatorship that had been as ruth-ss as anything in Europe with secret police, tor-re, and economic ruin. That Night of Peron! et us have no question about this—a man can ing the darkness.

The second thing I want to say is that a man can ing disillusionment by promising a false dawn. ne bitterness that follows exploded promises is tentimes worse than the condition before. Oh, I n give any number of illustrations. Take educa-on, for example. Don't think I am against educa-on. I went to school for twenty years, for I de-ded if I was ever going to get anywhere at all, I ould need more education than most fellows. I lieve in it. I am aware that if you are ever in a untry where there is a high illiteracy rate, you ll know that it means trouble. Men who cannot ad or write in our day are prisoners. They cannot e as citizens of our world. But we were told some ne ago that abstract education, the teaching of cts, secular education, would save the world. Hear e tonight! The threat of our time is not the igno-nt man. It is not the uneducated jungle tribesman Africa. It is the educated man of Russia, and the ucated man of the United States, and of Germany d of England. Education has not automatically ved us. Some of us are feeling very disillusioned at this thing, which was supposed to be the swer, apparently poses more problems than it swers.

Aftermath of a False Dawn

Or take leisure. I heard a man argue—and it emed to me very convincingly—that when the ne came that we could have a short work week d people had more time to themselves, we would ve a better society. People would take more ne for culture and the development of the spirit d the mind. Well, we have a five-day week for a t of folks. I am not against it. We are not going ck, and it will be in the direction of more leisure at we move. But do you think it is true automati-lly that people with more leisure on their hands e happier people? Could you prove tonight that ey are better people? Is this a better nation be-use we have more leisure? I doubt it.

We thought at one time that lack of power was e big problem. The ancient civilizations had to ild on slavery. We said if we could ever have wer to set men free from the hard tasks, that ould be the solution. We have it. We are at the ginning of the greatest power age any generation er dreamed possible. Power in the atom! Instead being confident that this is the answer to our oblem we are frightened to death lest that power itself destroy us.

I read the other day about some safe-crackers a little town in Canada who broke into a business ice and used so much dynamite to blow up the fe that it destroyed the thirty-six dollars in bills ey might have had, caused two thousand dollars rth of damage to the office—and they found e cents! There is a parable! The power which is more than we know what to do with, instead of being the answer, seems to be the main problem we face.

You can put this down as true, I think, that a man-made dawn is a false dawn. When a man says, "By our own cleverness we can bring in the new day," we should distrust him. Such light is sterile; nothing grows in it. Every time I am out of this country and come back, I am impressed again with the lighted streets of American cities at night. There are not many cities throughout the world where the streets are so well lighted. And the stores are lighted. Oh, they're brilliant! But they do not mean that we have found the new day, not really.

Disappointment and Disillusion

Perhaps I am making more of this than I should, but it seems to me that in some ways it is worse to promise a dawn that will be only disillusionment than to make no promise at all. For when a man comes to realize that what he believed in is false, it does something to his mind that is evil.

The late Bishop Francis J. McConnell was once president of DePauw University. He always liked to be on the land, and after retirement he lived on a farm in Ohio. When he was at DePauw he had a small acreage where he raised chickens. He said that everything went all right except in the mid-dle of the night the rooster would start to crow and wake everybody up. He could not understand this behavior so he stayed up one night to find out the trouble. He said that along about two o'clock in the morning, the interurban train coming out from Indianapolis would swing around a curve, and the headlight would shine into the chicken house. The rooster, thinking it was the sun, would begin to crow. And the bishop said, "It is not only roosters that mistake headlights for dawns." Indeed it is not! If men can sometimes bring the darkness, so sometimes in their pride and in their limited knowledge they can promise dawns which never come, and bring disillusionment.

Dark Periods of History

Now the third thing I want to say is that there are some people who do not bring the darkness and they do not promise false dawns, but they are the kind of people who wait for the coming day. Don't play that down! They are on the side of light. They hope a new day will come, and in the meantime, to the best of their ability they will patiently wait for it.

Sometimes that is about all you can do. There was a period in history some historians call the Dark Ages. It was the period after the downfall of the Roman civilization when the barbarians tri-umphed, and it seemed as if all civilization had ended. Yet in that dark time of history, there were little centers of light here and there, particularly in the monasteries. Men kept some light burning, waiting for a larger opportunity. It was about all they could do.

There are periods when humanity takes a dark way wandering out through the jungles. In the hope of finding a short cut we forget the moral

law and the straight path and follow some bypath. In such a situation, about all you can do is wait until men turn back, having learned the hard way. Sometimes generations promote dark movements, when in a kind of madness they lift high the worst parts of the community, and follow the lie instead of the truth. In such dark days we seem to be blinded, and prefer darkness to light, casting suspicion upon every honest witness.

Sympathizers Wait for Better Days

In a time like that there is not a great deal that an individual can do except wait for the better time. That is important, and the world has many people who will not do much themselves, but they hope somebody else will. They wait for something to happen and they applaud if it does happen. They may even pray that somebody will do something to bring about a better time. In our church in Argentina, for example, I discovered that we have three classes of people. There are first of all the members. Then there are the probationers who are studying the church. There is a third class called the "sympathizers." They do not join, but they are the kind of people who are on your side, if it does not cost much. They sympathize. They hope you do something and they will applaud if you gain a victory.

There is a story in the Old Testament about such people. It has to do with Elijah, and it is one of the most familiar stories in the Bible. You remember that Elijah had defeated four hundred and fifty priests of Baal. He had done it single-handedly with the help of God. Then in that nervous depression after a wicked queen threatened his life, Elijah fled away to the wilderness and in despondency sat down and sulked. When an angel came to him and asked him what the trouble was, he said, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers." Well, why did he think he was? That was one mistake he made. Then you remember the angel said, "Arise and eat, else the journey will be too great for you." When he reached the mountain of the Lord, there came the wind, but God's voice was not in it; and the earthquake, but he did not hear God speak through the earthquake; and then the fire, but the voice of God was not in the fire. After this the story says there came the still small voice, and he heard God speak. And when he made the complaint that he alone was left and they were seeking his life, God said, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus . . . Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him." Well, they were the fellows who had not said anything. They were the ones Elijah had never heard of, but they were there, and they were waiting for the better day. You could count on them, when the time came, to show themselves.

Encouraging Signs

One of the most encouraging things that come to a man after he does something courageous—and he is frightened—is to discover how many people are glad that he did it. They stand by him, after the deed has been done. They would not do it, but they are on his side. This is good to know.

My wife and I were driving from Munich to Frankfort with an army colonel and his wife. We stopped at one of the snack bars on the main highway provided by our military forces in Germany for personnel. It was a cafeteria. We got our food and sat down at a corner table. A civilian family came in, though I suppose the father must have been connected with the military in some way. There were four children—one an infant and the other three very small. They got their food, sat down, each child helping the one that was a little smaller. Then when they were all quiet, the father bowed his head and the mother and children all bowed their heads while he said grace. Perhaps I make more of this than I should, but I think that over the whole noisy place there came a quietness and a different spirit. That family was saying, "We know that not many people do this. This isn't a popular thing any more, but we believe in it, and we bear our witness to it. We wait for a better time." Such acts are not unimportant.

America's Opportunity

The last thing I want to speak about is the great word of the Psalmist, "I will awake the dawn. I will not bring the darkness. I will not promise a dawn that is false. I will not just wait for something to happen. I will awake the dawn. I will do something to bring it about."

I believe that since time began there has never been a nation with a more wonderful opportunity to usher in a new day than America has at this particular time. I know something of our problems, I think. I share with you the disappointment at the limited accomplishments at Geneva. I have some understanding of the recalcitrance of communism and the evil of that system. I know that around the world there is a great deal of envy of America and a great deal of criticism, much of it unfair and untrue. But I know also that there is no nation anywhere to whom more people turn with hope, no nation that more people would rather come to and live in, than America. I do not think that any nation ever had the opportunity we have for the building of a better world and for the introduction of a new day.

We will not do it by military power. That is not enough. It is necessary, but it is not enough. We will not do it by pushing people around. They will not be pushed around. We cannot set up a pattern and force everybody into it. These things will not work. We will do it by showing the world that we believe in people—in the dignity and the significance of every man's life. We must demonstrate a society in which it makes no difference whether a man is rich or poor, in his status before the law. This must be a land where men have liberty. I am tired of hearing only complaints about all our problems. In heaven's name let us understand that God has given us a great opportunity to bring in a new day.

That is true of the church. If there is one man

ave a great deal of difficulty in sympathizing with, t is a preacher who is sorry for himself. Never was here such a day as this in which to preach, never uch a day as this for the church to bear its witness! et the church know that it stands before an unparlleled opportunity to awake the dawn.

Program for the Church

I say to each one of us tonight, this is the great ood news of the gospel: We can live in such a way hat we hasten that new day, and we bring light here there is darkness. This is what He does hrough us. Not through our own power, nor our wn cleverness, but by coming into our lives hrough the Lord Jesus Christ, God fills our hearts ith an inner power and puts a new vision in our inds. We become the kind of people who move bout in their own small places, and bring the light f the better day.

I have met a good many great missionary leaders ately, but one stands out pre-eminently. I met im in La Paz, Bolivia. He has been the head of he American Clinic in that city for twenty-six ears. He is just about ready to retire now and ome home. His name is Dr. Beck. I did not get this tory from him, of course, but it came from people here who know his history. He went to South merica about thirty-one years ago, as a teacher, nd then came to the conclusion that what the ountry needed above everything else was a doctor o work with the Indians. Many were sick, but obody was looking after them because nobody ared about them. He said to the Bolivian governent, "If you will send me back to the States as a olivian student, so I can return, I will go to school nd get an M.D. degree. I will come back, not as a ompetitor of Bolivian doctors, but to work only ith the Indians." They said, "Fine."

The Night Will End

While he was in the United States studying for is medical degree, there was a change in Bolivia's overnment, a not unusual occurrence, and there as a Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. They said, You cannot come back. You might be a competior of our own doctors." We had an American amassador who knew the president very well and he alled on him in behalf of Dr. Beck. The president t first was adamant and said it could not be done. nd then the story says that the American amassador said to the president, just as he was leavng, "Oh, by the way, that loan you want from the nited States, I cannot approve." "Well, come on ack and let's talk about this a little further," said he president. I do not know what happened then, ut when the ambassador left, Dr. Beck was to ome back. And they are glad he came back. Bovia gave him the highest honor a civilian can eceive. In the war with Paraguay it was this man ho was head of the medical service. He is a first itizen of Bolivia.

There in La Paz is a modern hospital which he as built and dedicated to the service of people no ne else cared anything about. The roof of the ospital offers a beautiful view, for the city is twelve thousand feet high, and it is surrounded by the Andes peaks, some of them twenty thousand feet. As I stood there talking to Dr. Beck, he said, "Twenty-six years ago when I began, it was all dark. Now, at last I begin to see a little light." And I wanted to say to him, "But Doctor, of course you begin to see a little light. You have awakened it. You brought it in."

I am aware tonight that not all of us can be doctors, and not all of us are called to the mission field. But I believe that every one of us is called to be the kind of person, in his family, in his personal relationships, in his business, described by the Psalmist. When there are enough of us, then God will proclaim across the whole wide earth: "The night is ended. I will awake the dawn!"

A Pastoral Prayer

ALMIGHTY God, at all times and in all places it is good for us to laud and magnify thy holy name. So, with the seraphim and cherubim, we say, "Holy, Holy, Holy."

We are grateful for thy mercy revealed in Jesus Christ and demonstrated through the experiences of our faith.

To the wise magi, thou art the person receiving adoration;
To the fearful shepherd, thy voice speaks peace;
To the troubled Gadarene, thou art release from a legion of mental chains;
To the helpless paralytic, thou art the hope of healing and health;
To the selfish, greedy Zachaeus, thou art the guide to righteousness;
To the unfaithful steward, thou art judgment;
To the foolish prodigal, thou art a merciful, understanding, forgiving, loving father;
To the doubting disciple, thou art a clear revelation;
To the inquiring Nicodemus, thou art a satisfying philosophy for life;
To the mourning Martha and Mary, comfort and hope;
To the Cana wedding party, a welcome, cheerful guest;
To the thoughtless who would sacrifice, an ethic where first man must be reconciled, then present his gift;
To the self-righteous and self-satisfied, prompting conscience focused on the Jericho road with the Samaritan as a neighbor;
To the religion of empty form and ceremony, a spirit to call out truth in worship.

And now, great God, our Father, reveal thyself to us, to meet our present need. Then visit, through the ministry of thine ever-present Spirit, our loved ones everywhere. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.—*Royald V. Caldwell, Faith United Church of Christ, Chicago.*

Can We Still Believe In a God of Love?

By Herbert Gezork

PROBABLY one of the briefest definitions of God which you could find anywhere in the world's religious literature is that in I John 4. It has only three words: "God is love." Just like that. But can one believe it? Can one believe it in a world like ours?

Perhaps some of you have, as I have, stood at the center of one of those many, many cemeteries that you find now all over the earth, looking down the endless rows of white crosses and thinking that under each of those a young husband, or father, or son is buried. How can a God of love permit that? Or perhaps you have talked with mothers who told you that the worst experience was not the rain of bombs day after day and night after night upon their cities, but that the worst was to be wakened by the plaintive crying of their children, "Mummy, I am so hungry," and not to have even a crust of dry bread to give them; and then they asked, "Why, God, if thou art love, is that possible?"

Of course there are many people in the world today who do not want to believe in a God of love; who, in fact, do not want to believe in a God at all, and who find a rather convenient alibi for their unbelief in these stark facts of evil and suffering that stare into their faces from every side.

But even more often it is the most sincere believer in God who finds himself perplexed and baffled by these facts. The higher our conception of God becomes, the deeper grow many of the perplexities which face us as we think of God. Primitive religion simplifies matters. There, people believe in evil spirits and in good spirits: all that's evil in their lives comes, they believe, from the evil spirits, and all that's good in their lives comes from the good spirits. But when you believe in one God who is absolute Power, and at the same time absolute Love, how can you square that with all that is going on in the world?

Nevertheless there are insights in our Christian faith which, like arrows of light, dispel a good deal of this darkness and perplexity. One of them is the fact that much of the evil and suffering that fall into the life of man is simply the result of ou breaking of God's laws. It is not God's doing. It i our own doing, for our God is a God of order. H has written certain laws into his universe; amon them are physical laws. If somebody would clim up to the ceiling of this room and jump down, h would break his neck. We all know that. It is th law of gravity. We have learned it and we act ac cordingly, knowing that if we break it we shall hav to bear the consequences. But God has also writte moral laws into his universe, and mankind has ha opportunity to learn them and to act according t them; and when we break them we again have t bear the consequences. "Do not be deceived . . . fo whatever a man sows, that he will also reap," say the Bible.

I have been in several jails—I hasten to add, onl as a visitor. But I have seen, in the lives of thos who were there not as visitors, the results of thei breaking of God's law. And what is true of individ uals is true of whole generations. Modern discoverie about the laws of heredity bear out in often ter rifying ways the truth of the ancient word of th Bible that God visits "the iniquity of the fathe upon the children to the third and fourth genera tion." This is true also of whole nations. Hitle shouted to the world, "*Ich werde die Städte England ausradieren* (I shall erase the cities of England)! But if you visit Germany you will see that it wa the cities of Germany which were erased.

A Righteous God

Let no one think that the God of the Christia faith is a kind of granddad who will always clos his eyes to whatever men do, and let bygones b bygones; who always has to forgive, because, a Heine cynically said, "That, after all, is his bus ness." Such a god would not be God any more.

Too many people have a kind of bellboy idea God. You never think about the bellhop in a hot until you need him. Then you push the butto and woe to him if he doesn't appear speedily an do your bidding. That is exactly the idea a lot people have of God. They never care about hi until something goes wrong; then they call upo him. But if he does not do their bidding right awa they say, "I won't believe in him." Let us remembe that behind the love of God there stands the righ eousness of God. And let us further remember tha God is teaching mankind patiently, but also sternl

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HERBERT GEZORK *returns this month to his duties as president of Andover Newton Theological School, after sabbatical leave. Born in Germany, he had earned a doctor's degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and had served as secretary of the German Baptist Youth Movement before he came to the United States in 1936. Naturalized in 1943, he served as consultant to leaders of U. S. occupation forces in Germany following World War II. He was a delegate to the Lund Conference on Faith and Order in 1952 and to the World Council of Churches Assembly in 1954.*

at evil done brings evil consequences to those who
l it, and often also to others.
But now you say, "If God is love, could he not
ve created for mankind a world without the
ssibility of men doing evil and wrong, of break-
g his laws and then having to bear the conse-
ences?" I think the answer to that question is
t too difficult. The possibility of doing wrong
d then having to bear the consequences for
rongdoing is the price that man has to pay for
s freedom—the freedom which lifts him above the
imal world, and without which he would be
erely a moral automaton. There can be no good,
al genuine good, unless there exists the possibility
choose evil. All of us who have children know
at these children never will grow up into mature
rsons unless we give them chances to make
oices and decisions of their own. That always
volves the risk that they will make the wrong
oice and the wrong decision, but that risk we
ve to take if we want them to grow up. And so it
with God.
The English philosopher Chesterton once said, "I
mand the right to be damned." However provoca-
ve that sounds, I must agree with him. I want
world that would give us a Moses and a Francis
Assisi, a Florence Nightingale, an Albert Schweit-
r and above all a Jesus of Nazareth. But I know
at will have to be a world which will also have
s Judas and its Jezebel, its Hitler and its Stalin.
hat is the price that we pay for our freedom.

Christian Answer to Suffering

Perhaps now you say, "That may be so, but what
out all the suffering that comes into man's life
hich is not the result of his wrong choices or his
il deeds, but which is the result of forces over
hich he has no influence whatsoever? What about
tural catastrophies, floods, earthquakes, germs?"
the city of Boston, where I live, we had a very
rious polio epidemic in 1955. In my community
observed how one little boy, an only child, was
ruck down by it. In the next house were six chil-
en, yet none of them was touched by the epi-
mic. One asks: How can a God of love permit that?
Here the answer is more difficult. But perhaps
e come close to it when we ask the question:
hat is our highest destiny here on earth? Is it just
live complacent, easy, comfortable lives, like
ntented cows on a lush meadow? Some philoso-
hies find no higher purpose in life, and they will
ve to seek their own answers to the problem of
ffering. But that is not the Christian answer.
ccording to Christianity we are here to grow in
derstanding, in wisdom, in strength of character,
love, in goodness. And I think we will have to
lmit that all these come about not so much
rough ease and comfort as by overcoming obsta-
es, by triumphing over tragedy.
Suppose for a moment God had said to himself,
shall let no evil, no suffering, ever fall upon
ankind. I shall give men nothing but health, ease,
mfort, pleasure." That sounds fine, doesn't it?
ut is it really so fine? Would such a plan not
ve deprived mankind forever of the possibility to
develop all that is finest and noblest in human life and character and history? Without hardship there could never be any helpfulness; there would be no opportunity for it. Without danger there could never be courage; there would be no occasion for it. Without need there would never be any sharing. Without suffering there would never be compassion. The very traits that come to our minds when we think of saints, of men and women at their best, most Christlike—those very traits would never have a chance to develop into realities if there were never any suffering. A God who would never let a tragedy fall upon mankind would be a God who would condemn us forever to a life of moral and spiritual mediocrity and stagnation.

Incomprehensible Universe

Now these are some of the answers that come to our minds as we wrestle with this problem of suffering on the one side and a God of love on the other side. But do these answers satisfy us fully? Do they dissolve all our questions? No! At least not for me. But what of it? Am I God, that I should be able to comprehend the great universe in my little brain? How small the universe then would be! The fishermen of Bretagne in France say a prayer before they sail out on their dangerous day's or night's work, and in that prayer occur these words: "O God, thy ocean is so great and my boat is so small . . . " That is the way we must think of our capacity to understand and explain the mysteries of life.

Adolph Harnack, truly one of the great minds of this century, said once to us young students at the end of a long discussion of a difficult philosophical question: "Gentlemen, as we seem to have solved this one problem, I see at least three new ones opening before us, more difficult than this. In probing the mysteries of the universe and of life, we are like children wading on the shore; the further we walk out, the more we become aware of the depth of the sea. Let us be humble." George Santayana, in one of his most beautiful sonnets, likens human knowledge to a pine torch which "lights our pathway just one step ahead, across a void of mystery and dread." And the Bible expresses it even better when it says, "Now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face."

Yet there is one point in history where the dim and dark become sharp and clear, and that point is Jesus Christ. Love is a personal quality. Between human beings, you really never know what love is until you have experienced it in a personal relationship. Even if you read all the books about it you will never know what it means to love or to be loved until you experience it as husband or wife, or friend, or parent or child. So it is between God and man; therefore the love of God had to be personalized in a life here on earth, and that is the meaning of the coming of Christ. In Christ, God comes down, down to us, to make his love real and personal.

So Christianity says, "You want to know who God is? You want to know how God is? Then look at Jesus." An Italian boy in a Boston Sunday school

(Continued on page 16)

The Tragedy Of a Good Word

By Ralph W. Loew

Then once more Jesus left the neighborhood of Tyre and passed through Sidon towards the Lake of Galilee, and crossed the Ten Towns territory. Then they brought to him a man who was deaf and unable to speak intelligibly, and they implored him to put his hand upon him. Jesus took him away from the crowd by himself. Then he put his fingers in the man's ears and touched his tongue with his own saliva. Then, looking up to Heaven, he gave a deep sigh and said to him in Aramaic,

"Open!"

And his ears were opened immediately and whatever tied his tongue came loose and he spoke quite plainly. Jesus gave instructions that they should tell no one about this happening, but the more he told them, the more they broadcast the news. People were absolutely amazed, and kept saying,

"How wonderfully he has done everything! He even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak."

Mark 7:31-37 (J. B. Phillips).

IT has been the tradition of Christendom that the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the church. From the days of Stephen through every decade since—in the days of the Inquisition, the days of the Reformation, the days of Dietrich Bonnhofer and Kaj Munk as well as Paul Mackenson who is in a Chinese prison still today—stalwart Christian men have stood with great faith in times of persecution. The church has known what it is to live in the days of tyranny. We have been taught how to behave in the catacombs.

Contemporary Witness

Every one of us is thrilled by that kind of story, but the honest truth is that contemporary America finds little reality in it. You and I are not pushed up against that wall where we have to say, "I won't give up this last iota of my faith." As a matter of fact, for the American church the problem is not how to behave in the catacombs; our problem is how to behave in the white light of publicity. We are on television. We are on the radio. We are noted by magazines. The church is constantly in the public eye.

The American church today is in a critical period when it has to understand what it is that must be witnessed to this world. What do we have to say when the ears are listening and the eyes are watching and the minds are sensitive? Let us go back to this scene of which Mark tells, for here were people who had come to listen to this Man who had been arousing curiosity, and they watched him in a moment of communication. He was talking to a man who was deaf and dumb. How would you do it? Jesus looked to heaven, and he made a little mud pie in his hand, touched the man's lips and sighed. And the man began to speak. Then Jesus asked the people to tell no one about it; but the more he told them, the more they rushed about, broadcasting the news: "How wonderfully he has done everything!"

Why did Jesus ask them not to tell? Wasn't it a good word that they would say? "He does everything so well!" Now just between us, most of us pastors would be happy to have people say, "He is such a fine minister. He does everything so well!" Would you stop people from saying that? But the Master had come not to win plaudits but to capture hearts, not to establish a kingdom of political prestige but to install the Kingdom of God within human lives, not to astonish but to call men with a great commitment of their total being. If they went around satisfied with that wonderful word—a good word—it would be a tragedy, for they would make of Jesus merely a wonder-worker.

Empty Phrases

Jesus knew all about that. For instance, one day he was walking down a road and a woman said, "My, but your mother ought to be proud of you!" Or, as we read in Scripture, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" Jesus turned to her, saying, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" He knew the tragedy of just being satisfied with hearing, "My, but your mother ought to be proud of you!"

Then there was Pontius Pilate. Did he not say a

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ood word for Jesus? "I find no crime in him." hree minutes later he washed his hands of Jesus nd allowed him to be taken away to be crucified. is the tragedy of a good word that stops just ere.

I want us to think together about this tonight, r this is the season of Epiphany—the season in hich the church talks of the coming of the magi om the East, the time when we consider the world sion of the church. All too many of us in our time e liable to be satisfied with the plaudits, with the creasing publicity, and forget the thing that mat-rs most. For *Jesus wants adoration, not admira-on.* "People were absolutely amazed," and ad-ired him, saying, "How wonderfully he has done erything!" But when Thomas acknowledged Jesus ith the words, "My Lord and my God!" you re-ember how He said, "Blessed are those who have ot seen and yet believe."

Then there was Simon Peter, who came to Jesus tell him about all the wonderful, good words, nd the broadcasting that was going on. Jesus sked, "What are they saying about me, Peter?" nd Peter said, "Well, some say you are Elijah; nd some, Jeremiah. And do you know, some of em say you are John the Baptist come back nong us!" Good word, that. But Jesus wanted the tal commitment of this man. He wanted his adora-on, if you please. And He asked, "Who do you y I am?" Then it was that Peter said, "I say that ou are the Christ, the Son of the living God." esus promised that his church would be built on at confession of faith.

Measure of Success

Now if any of you, and especially you young eople who are here this evening, aspire to succeed this world by just winning the admiring plaudits your colleagues, you had better be prepared for alousy. There will be those who will not be happy ecause you have succeeded. Let anyone advance in ience, in politics or in diplomatic service, in music in any of the arts, and there are always those to xplain" that man. If at that moment he has no urpose in life but the securing of plaudits, then s whole life is made miserable. But if at that mo-ent he has for his purpose something which wins s high reverence—if there is something left for m besides the applause of the people about him; he knows the difference between greatness and gness, between price and value, between success nd achievement, between a standard of living and standard of life—then he will have come to the ace where he is able to adore, able to be quiet in e midst of great reverence. He is not satisfied then th the good word said about him; he only wants e Word of God to dwell in his heart—and that ly.

What do you want most out of life: to be the st-dressed woman of the year, the wittiest con-rsationalist on your campus, the boy most likely succeed in 1970? What do you want most: that, just to have one person who loves you, just to ve some individual who finds in you a hinge of stiny? Better still, to have many who find their whole life opened up, as John R. Mott opened up mine here in this place? This is what Jesus wanted —to find somewhere those who would adore the God of this universe, and find him resident in their lives. Such adoration is the rootage for the moral courage required for great living in any age.

Jesus Is Contemporary

There is a clean, clear voice out in Ceylon, the voice of D. T. Niles. Dr. Niles says:

> We all know the figure of the risen Christ knocking at the Soul's closed door; but let us not forget . . . that the knock persists as long as any door remains closed. In the lives of most of us, the garden gate is open, so Jesus is not knocking there. The hall door is open and Jesus is not knocking there either. It is perhaps the bedroom door that is closed and that is where Jesus is knocking, or perhaps it is the door of the study—the room where we dream our ambitions and plan our future. We know each one for himself and herself just where the Master is knocking, and we know too just why we have not yet opened to him.
>
> But . . . while we can refuse to open . . . he remains the inescapable Christ. Knocking, knocking, knocking, persistently and patiently knocking, he besieges our soul until every door is opened and every area of life is handed over to his control. . . . To live in a world where Jesus is risen is to live in a world where Jesus is at work.[1]

He came to win our adoration, not our admiration, for the admiring word can be only the tragedy of a good word.

Adoration issues in commitment of the total self. Paul Tillich tells of a woman, Elsa Brandstrom, who became famous during World War I. Her father was Sweden's ambassador to Russia. As she watched the starving, miserable, ill-clothed prisoners, her heart was touched, and she decided to risk her social prestige to help them. There began a total commitment of her life. So unstintingly did she give herself, even to the breaking of health, that all across Europe there were people who praised God because of Elsa Brandstrom. Writing of her, Paul Tillich says:

> It is a rare gift to meet a human being in whom love—and this means God—is so overwhelmingly manifest. It undercuts theological arrogance as well as pious isolation. It is more than justice and it is greater than faith and hope. It is the presence of God himself. For God is love. And in every moment of genuine love we are dwelling in God and God in us.[2]

The Apostle Paul told of this with remarkable clarity in I Corinthians 13. People were coming to him with their admiring words: "Look how I speak for God," said one; and another, "Look! I give my body to be burned." And Paul said, "Yes, but if you do not have love in your hearts, this is a noisy gong and a clanging cymbal, and it is nothing."

When a man is committed to a cause, then it is no longer just his opinion which he holds but a great idea that has laid hold upon him. That man is captured. He is committed. He is no longer following the star of success, but he has come to know the Star of Bethlehem, and he is ready to worship. He is no longer lost in the white light of publicity,

[1] D. T. Niles, *That They May Have Life* (New York: Harper, 1951). Used by permission.

[2] Paul Tillich, *The New Being* (New York: Scribner's, 1955). Used by permission.

but he has come to know the clear white light of One who could say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Blessed are you when you know how destitute you are—destitute before the greatness of God.

Now if we in America are to say anything in our day to this world, and if the Christian church is to win the allegiance of people in our time and generation, it will be because we are committed and are never content with mere plaudits. Else we shall know the tragedy of words which are gone with the wind, and shall have missed the eternal, abiding Word that can dwell in us.

When there is humble commitment, it will be like that of Tenzing, the Sherpa who went with Hillary to conquer Everest. On a previous attempt, Tenzing had gone so high he could look up to the climax of the adventure, but success had to be postponed. He wrote:

> I believe in God. I believe that in men's hardest moments he sometimes tells them what to do, what decision to make, and that he did it then for Lambert and me. We could have gone farther. We could perhaps have gone to the top. But we could not have got down again. To go on would be to die. And we did not go on. We stopped and turned back. . . . We descended without speaking. Down the long ridge, past the high camp, along the ridge again, along the snow slope. Slowly—slowly. Down—down—down.[3]

Down—that once more Tenzing might prepare to go up.

More than ever before we must take care lest we think we are going up, as we tell of wonder-working in our midst, and miss the commitment of our own lives and of the community in which we live, missing the very grace of God. "For I am persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God." Or, to stand as Luther, "Take they then goods, child wife; they still have nothing won. The kingdom ours remaineth." Or, as Joan of Lorraine said, "Sometimes people believe in little or nothing; nevertheless, they give themselves to little or nothing." One life is all that we have, and we live it as we believe in living it, and then it is gone. But to surrender what you are, and to live without belief, is more terrible than dying, even more terrible than dying young.

That brings you at long last to the point which those people who were going out to talk about Jesus had to know: before you can say a good word for Jesus you must know the grace of God! For it is the miracle of time that God breaks through, to live in our midst, so that we are not lonesome strugglers in this old universe. We are discovering in our time that which gives a vital sense of citizenship, the sense of God's abiding grace in our hearts. We belong. We are citizens of his Kingdom; therefore we are citizens of *this* kingdom. There is an aristocracy about such persons, a nobility of character, because they have first been won, and then they give. The Word is in them; therefore there are living words spoken into living situations. Such knowledge of God's grace is the triumph of the Christian life.

[3]*Tiger of the Snows*, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. Copyright 1955 by Tenzing Norgay and James Ramsey Ullman. Used by permission.

Walter Lippmann, in his book *The Public Philosophy*, tells of this aristocracy:

> This is the inwardness of the ruling man, whatever his titles and his rank, that for the sake of his realm, of his order, of his regiments, of his cause, of his ship, he is the noble master of his own weaker passions. Although this is the artistocratic code, it is not inherent by prerogative or birth. It is functional in the capacity to rule. It is because the aristocrats have been rulers, not because they belong to the aristocracy, that they themselves have had aristocratic virtues. When, like the French nobles, they have lost self-mastery as a principle, then, if they cling too long to their privileges, many of them will lose their noble heads.[4]

Indeed they will! And indeed will the church and our civilization, if we have been satisfied with the externals and have lost the thing which matters most. The tragedy of a good word is that it is satisfied with this external, admiring word. The triumph of the Word of God is its exciting vitality, its urgency, its good grace.

In this time of great accomplishments, in this time of the white light of publicity, in this time of the broadcasting of news, in this time of destiny for the Christian church, we are called away from that tragedy of being satisfied with only a good word. This is the time to be won once more to this eternal cause of a living, loving Father, speaking to living people in living situations. This is ours, and to this cause we are everlastingly called. It is given to us to adore, to commit our lives again, and to know that grace of God which can enable us to speak cleanly and clearly in our day. God save us from the tragedy of contentment with only a good word, until we know the triumph of the living Word!

[4]Walter Lippmann, *Public Philosophy* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Co.) Used by permission.

Can We Still Believe?

(Continued from page 13)

expressed it excellently, in poor English but in good theology, when he was asked who Jesus was. He said, "Jesus was the best photo of God that was ever took." So he was! As he loved those who hated him, so does God. As he forgave those who put him on a cross, so does God forgive. As he transformed evil into good in the crucible of his suffering, so does God in his suffering for the world and with the world.

That is why, as we are confronted with Christ our faith is restored and renewed. That is why at the heart of the universe is not blind incident, no cold indifference, but care, concern, compassion love. In that assurance we can make our own these words of the Apostle Paul which, the more I ponder them, become for me more and more the most wonderful words in the whole Bible: "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." To hold that conviction in spite of anything that may happen: that is the glory of the Christian faith.

'Still he calls . . . "Christian, love me more than these!" '

Personal Call From Long Distance

By David A. MacLennan

IMAGINE yourself in a strange hotel in a strange city. You are sitting in a crowded lobby. Through the lounge move many persons, not one of them with what the Scottish folk call a "kent" face. Truth to tell, you are suffering the pangs of nostalgia. A smidgeon of homesickness assails you. A bellboy moves through the lobby of the hotel. He is calling, paging someone, and suddenly you become to." He is calling your name! With unexpected alacrity you make yourself known to the boy and he tells you there is a call for you, long distance. You go to the telephone, and a well-remembered voice, across perhaps thousands of miles, speaks your name. It may not be anything extremely vital upon which the destinies of the nation may depend, but it's the well-remembered voice of your dearest. It may be only reassurance to remind you that you are not forgotten, even on this brief excursion from home. It may be only to tell you that it wasn't chicken pox that Junior had —it was only the result of an indiscretion of one kind or another.

Three Stages of Modern Man

More persons than we suspect, in every city, not only the cities of dreadful night but in the cities, towns and villages of our feverish planet, are wistfully hoping for what our British friends call "a personal call from long distance."

> For men are homesick in their homes,
> And strangers under the sun,
> And they lay their heads in a foreign land
> Whenever the day is done.[1]

A Christian thinker of our time from Europe, surveying contemporary man, declares that the thoughtful pilgrim of the second half of the 20th century moves in his pilgrimage through three stages. First of all, after the agitation and the business of making a living subsides, he feels rootless and insecure. Insecure, even in an economy of unparalleled prosperity. You don't need to be told who in North America never had it so good. It's the moving firms. One of the great transport companies of the United States has estimated that one out of every seven families they moved last year will move again within two years and a half, and they'll move not just from one position in a city to another but from one state to another. This external condition—so many wives of junior executives living almost in suitcases, not simply those in the armed services—is symptomatic of our spiritual rootlessness. Jesus our Lord said, you remember, "Why are individuals unable to stand up against the storms of life? They have no root in them."

Search for Life's Meaning

The second stage of the pilgrimage, says our modern Christian philosopher, is when your thoughtful 20th century person begins asking some vital questions about life's meaning. He may not have to be an Existentialist (I wanted to show that my six years in Yale enabled me to say the precious word once!) He may not be one of the modern philosophers who feel that every man is standing on the brink of the abyss, looking into meaninglessness. But if he is thoughtful, there will come moments when your modern person asks, "What's the score? What's it all about?"

The third stage of the human situation, says our interpreter, comes when the modern pilgrim decides that the answers, even working answers to these questions, are not in us. Then he realizes that if he cannot be given meaning and rescue and deliverance from within the human circle, it may be that he will be given deliverance, and meaning, and a clue from outside the human circle, beyond history, and yet in the midst of time. It is then that he is most receptive to a personal call from long distance from beyond the flaming ramparts of our world.

Eager Anticipation

Our most perceptive modern poet, W. H. Auden, in one of his most famous longer poems, describes 20th century youth in vivid terms. The description

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[1] Reprinted by permission of Dodd, Mead & Company from *The Collected Poems of G. K. Chesterton.* Copyright 1932 by Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc.

DAVID A. MACLENNAN *left the faculty of Yale Divinity School in 1955 to return to the ministry as pastor of Brick Presbyterian Church in Rochester, New York. He was born in Boston and received his early education there. Later, after his father, the late Rev. Alexander K. MacLennan, began serving churches in Canada, he studied in British Columbia schools and at the University of Manitoba. Ordained a minister of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. in 1927, he served a church in Hyde Park, Massachusetts, while studying at Harvard Divinity School. Pastorates in Baltimore, Montreal and Toronto followed, along with the production of numerous books and articles, and frequent appearances as guest preacher. His Warrack lectures on preaching were published last August by Westminster under the title* Entrusted with the Gospel.

is applicable to a man or woman of any age, whatever the number of birthdays. Said Auden,

> To be young means
> To be all on edge, to be held waiting in
> A packed lounge for a Personal Call
> From Long Distance, for the low voice
> That defines one's future.[2]

Let me change it. To be alive, to be something more than static in a dynamic universe, is to be waiting, all on edge, in a packed lounge, for a personal call from long distance.

This is the tremendous claim of the biblical faith, of Christianity on the main line, when the faith is flying the beam. From prophets of the eighth century before Christ right through God's unique disclosure in Jesus Christ, it is the tremendous claim of our biblical faith that man has actually received a personal call from long distance; that you cannot really understand history, and certainly you cannot approach it with anything like confidence, in spite of the devilish, the demonic in it, unless you can see it as again and again a person-to-person (not *parson*-to-person) call from long distance. It is to be understood also in terms of the response that men and women of diverse racial background, culture, nationality, era, have made to it.

Tremendous Claim of Faith

You cannot understand the Scriptures of our Hebrew-Christian faith without understanding that its genius is to be discerned here. Abraham going out, not knowing whither he went, but going out to a better country for himself and for his people, hears this call. He responds with the service of his life. Moses takes his stubborn, recalcitrant people (you remember what the old preacher said, that it took Moses forty years to get them out of Egypt, and then it took him forty years to get Egypt out of them). The sun-crowned prophet, the young aristocrat Isaiah hears this call in a time of national upheaval, as if the president of the republic were suddenly stricken in death, "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord, high and lifted up"—a personal call from long distance—"and I heard a voice which others could not hear, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I, in spite of my imperfections and uncleanness, said, 'Here I am! Send me.' " Jeremiah, the most Christlike soul before Christ; Amos insisting that there is no vital religion without social righteousness rolling down like the waters; and Hosea, seeing in his own domestic heartbreak the broken heart of the Eternal. Again and again the call sounds. Until at last in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, come in a human life, uniquely and redemptively, the incarnation of God, in a Galilean girl's Child. God taking little short steps, that we could keep up with Him. "I come to do thy will, O God. I have come," He said, "to bear witness to the truth." Personal call from long distance.

In the second place, it is the tremendous claim of our faith that God has not only called men and women through all the great faiths—supremely through Israel's faith, through the little creative minority who made covenant with him—but that *God has called from long distance into the present uniquely, in the birth, the life, the teachings, the death, the resurrection, and the continued life of God in Christ.* This divine summons is transmitted through his redemptive community, the church. I am not asking you to believe this. I am simply telling you that this is the faith, like it or reject it as you wish. This is the tremendous claim of the faith. Now and then men and women have felt this touch upon them; they have known that He has spoken.

God Calls Today

Did I say "personal call from *long* distance in Christ"? In a sense this is perfectly true. There can't be any greater distance between me and the infinitely holy and lovely and loving. There is this tremendous distance. And yet, did you hear that word of God which came through the words written by the genius who wrote the Letter to the Ephesians in our New Testament? "You who were alienated, you who were on the outside, you who were isolated, you have been brought near through the blood of Christ."

It is the third tremendous claim of the Christian faith that not only has there come a personal call from long distance through the living Word of God our Scriptures; that, in a way words are impotent fully to describe and communicate, not only has this call come through Jesus Christ, our divine and eternal Contemporary; but that *God calls men and women now.* In many ways, in diverse fashions, he calls us now.

"How can you tell?" someone asks. "Aren't you in a little danger here of being the victim of a pious illusion—pious, but still an illusion? How can you tell? Do you mean we should hear voices, like Joan of Arc?" Well, I know what the woman who has to put up with me year in and year out would say if I solemnly announced that I had heard voices that I was quite sure that God was speaking to me in audible fashion. She would say to me, "Dear, do you feel all right? You know, we have two or three psychiatrists in our congregation. Would you like to have an appointment made?" Yet, can you understand men like Francis of Assisi, singing his myriad melodies of the love of God along sun-kissed Italian roads? Can you understand St. Augustine, architect of the City of God, when the city which he loved was falling to barbarians? Can you understand John Huss, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, John Wesley, David Livingstone, Florence Nightingale, Jane Addams of Chicago, Albert Schweitzer yonder in dark—and brighter—Africa, Kagawa in Japan, and humble, unknown men and women who are living above the average, in response to something not seen with the eyes, something that was born nineteen hundred years ago "in a herdsman's shed and written in the secret Scriptures of the poor"? Can you understand them, and their contribution, through their vocation as well as through

[2]W. H. Auden, *The Age of Anxiety* (New York: Random House). Used by permission.

-time Christian service, except in terms of a re-
nse to a call of God? It might have been felt
d. It might have been a word spoken in Orches-
Hall of Chicago, in some little mission or in a
plain's service yonder in any part of the world.
n you understand it?

Tests for Validity of the Call

'Well," you say, "I would still like to know if it's
id." I am going to suggest three simple tests for
validity of your personal call from long distance,
ing you perhaps to pull yourself together, telling
u to be a little kinder than necessary, telling you
sweeten public relations in the situation in which
u can exercise some influence, telling you to make
ur witness.

I wish we could rescue that word "witness." Law-
s say that a jury discounts a professional witness,
l in a sense I and every minister suffer from such
advantage. But you laymen don't, who are listen-
.

One Holy Week two years ago I was in Raleigh,
rth Carolina, and the white preacher who was
host said, "You'd like to hear some real preach-
? Come with me." And we went. A Negro
man, Sister Geary, was preaching a thoughtful,
rching sermon. She has influenced the social con-
ence of that community. She was preaching on
security of the Christian believer. Every now
l then when she made a provocative statement
l there was no response from her congregation,
would stop and say, "Any witnesses? Any wit-
ses to this truth?" And someone would get up
l witness: "Yes, I know it's true," and then give
demonstration, give the testimony.

How can you tell then that the witness is true,
t the call is valid? *In the first place, it will be*
sonal.

In February 1955, thanks to the Protestant chap-
ns of the Army and of the Air Force in Germany,
ad the privilege of speaking to some of our en-
ed officers and men, as well as to the chaplains,
the headquarters of the Twelfth Air Force. Again
l again I was impressed by the fact that the call
uld come "person to person." That's the first
t, not because of my ministry but because of the
plains' ministry. If you want to know what the
y catholic church is, the holy universal church,
n look at some of our chaplains in the Army
l the Navy and the Air Force, of all denomina-
ns, who are working and worshiping with their
n. Again and again I would hear how this Joe
l that Tom felt a need which he could meet,
haps in a German community, perhaps with his
n comrades. It's personal. It will have your name
it.

Theological Truths

I am sure you have heard this little story because
u have had my friend and former colleague,
ton Pope, speak here. I want to give you the
hentic version of the story! It comes from New
ven. A young mother of a dear little girl came
ner minister and said, "I have a problem—a little
blem about my little girl's prayers. She loves to
pray every night. Of course we've taught her, and she loves to say the Lord's Prayer. That's my problem. She doesn't say the correct version, and I want to ask you whether or not I should correct her." The minister, being a very wise, understanding man, listened and said, "What does your little girl say that you think is incorrect?" "Well," said the mother, "every night she says very seriously and confidently, 'Our Father who art in New Haven, how did you know my name?" And the minister said, "I would not correct her. She has got hold of two deep theological truths which most grown-ups haven't got: first, that God is everywhere, even in New Haven; and second, that he knows her name." "He calleth his own by name." "My sheep hear my voice." You can be sure that the call you get to witness, to live the life, to change your direction, is valid if it is personal, if it makes you say, "Lord, there isn't much to me, and there isn't much of me, and there isn't much resource that I have, but you can have all there is, and not just in an advisory capacity."

Meeting Human Need

Second, you can be sure that this personal call from long distance is valid if it sends you out to meet human need. I was in Charlotte, North Carolina yesterday. A southerner who is a southerner from away back, speaking about the problem of segregation and desegregation, and that new term which some intelligent, well-meaning southerners have discovered, "interposition," said to me—and I know he had had a call from long distance—"You know this is coming. It's got to come." He was speaking about making all citizens first class citizens. "It's got to come, and it should come, and I wouldn't know what to think of God if it didn't come. It's going to be hard for us. There are all sorts of things mixed up in us. It's only a hundred years since our fathers, for economic and other reasons, got into a mess of their own contrivance. It's got to come. It has my vote to come, and it has my effort to come." Without fanfare he will speak much more effectively than I or any northerner could speak. It will be a response to a personal call from long distance to him from One in whom there is neither East nor West, nor north nor south, nor black nor white, for all are one.

Standing near the border of South Carolina I thought of that gallant southerner, Archibald Rutledge. I'm sure you know the story that he has written of how he was tremendously impressed by the Christian life and witness of a Negro pastor and his wife. When the pastor was suddenly taken, Mr. Rutledge knew that his widow had very little with which to go on. He knew that the widow had lived a life of completely selfless devotion to the needs of others. Mr. Rutledge renovated a cottage on his estate, redecorated it, refurnished it with fine modern new furniture, and came to this Christian lady and said, "It's yours." He was astonished, and I think horrified, to discover that one of the first persons to be entertained by this woman in her new home, was the most disreputable woman in the

(Continued on page 22)

When Christ Becomes Real

By Robert J. McCracken

IN one of his novels Galsworthy has a character, a soldier, wounded and home from France, who cries, "The war! The cursed war!" And then, walking along the street—it is a moonlight night—he catches sight of a church spire, rising ghostly over the roofs. "If Christ were real," he muses, "he'd reach that moon down and go chalking 'Peace' with it on every door of every house, all over Europe. But Christ's not real, and Hindenburg and Harmsworth are." When you look at the world today, at the tension between Israel and Egypt, at what went on in Geneva; when you read what columnists, novelists, dramatists are saying; when you see what reliance is placed on force and how feverish is the race for atomic supremacy, you can't help asking, Where does Christ come in? Treated with formal, deferential respect, he is practically ignored. Eisenhower and Eden, Krushchev and Nasser are real. But Christ—is he real?

Travestied by Worldlings

The fault lies in part with Christ's interpreters. Consider what has been done with him. Consider the influence on the general mind of much medieval art and many stained glass windows. The impression is of a pale Galilean; a visionary and a dreamer, not a prophet; timid and shrinking in disposition; somehow defective in positive moral qualities; the world grown gray at his breath. Think of Carlyle's outburst when he first saw Holman Hunt's portrait of Christ: "Do you suppose that Jesus walked about bedizened in priestly robes and a crown, and with yon jewels on his breast, and a gilt aureole round his head? There are notable presentations of Christ in paint and marble, and they are all alike. He has been travestied from the beginning by worldlings who have recorded their own ambitions as his." Travestied is a strong word, but you see what provoked it—that the Jesus of history shoul be so misrepresented, misinterpreted, misunder stood.

There is something almost approaching bitterne in Canon Raven's account of the Christ to whor he was introduced by his first teachers. When h began really to study the Gospels for himself it wa as though he had made a fresh and original dis covery. Listen!

> He is so plainly the hero that I wanted, the hero wh was not merely strong but sensitive and sympathetic, brav and yet tragic, lonely and wholly lovable. If only he ha been as real as Caesar; if only I had known his story as knew the Iliad; if only my teachers had not put a halo o his head and talked affectedly, or not at all, about him if they had treated him as what he is, the greatest an most alive of the sons of men; then the passion pent u within me would have found its object; my affection an my mind would have been his: I should have been give the friend that I was seeking.[1]

But if Christ seems unreal to many, the fault i not wholly that of his interpreters. If they were out spoken, and would say publicly what they thin privately, there are those who would tell us that th mention of Christ in relation to contemporary issue is for them a source not so much of illumination a of perplexity. They have so many problems wher Christ and his teaching are concerned—problem of relevance and practicality. This, they say, is rough, tough world. The race is to the swift and th battle to the strong. You are not in business o politics, in law practice or the classroom, or in any thing very long before you find that you can't b too idealistic. All along the line—in internationa relations, labor relations, personal relations—peopl take meekness for weakness and trade on it. Ther are go-getters who would snatch the very shir from your back. Loving your enemies, turning th other cheek, returning good for evil, praying fo those who do you dirty—all that is beautiful; but in a world armed to the teeth, isn't it a bit senti mental? Everybody recognizes that it is noble. Bu is it practical? Will it work?

Irrelevant and Impractical

That's what lots of people think, even if the don't come right out and say so. Santayana wa of the opinion that we Westerners have never reall admired the Christian virtues anyway. To judge no by profession on Sunday but by policy through th

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[1]Charles Raven, *A Wanderer's Way* (London: George Allen & Unwin Used by permission.

ek, it would appear that most of us feel that rist and his teaching are too far above ordinary nduct—so far above it that people, even Christian ople, rarely take Christ or his principles seriously. ere are those who, if they were to speak their nd, would acknowledge a lurking sympathy with etzsche, who raised a question whether the virs taught by Christianity—gentleness, humility, y—do not enfeeble and enervate human nature. me of you may have seen *South Pacific*, and ard the chorus sing:

You've got to be taught to be afraid
Of . . . people whose skin is a different shade . . .
You've got to be taught before it's too late,
Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate,
You've got to be carefully taught.[2]

rody! Musical comedy burlesque! But you know at is back of it. You have not forgotten about mmett Till. Ah, Christ, with all our vaunted ogress, how far we still are from you!

Moral Aspirants

There is a reply, though, to all this talk about elevance and impracticality. Shallow thinking is ck of some of it. Don't be gullible, too easily ken in by its plausibility. Remember that there is other aspect to the case. Christ is real and relent in the sense any ideal is real and relevant—as direction pointer, an end to be pursued, a standd to be attained, and especially as an incentive, a mulus, a dynamic. What he and his teaching ve done to lift the whole level of life is a fact of tory, testified to by historians again and again. be sure, living in a rough, tough world, he makes trenuous demand on us, and it would be easier to get about him. But is there a moral teacher of y consequence who does not pitch the demand gh? The ideal always towers above the actual. at is its function—to make and keep us moral asants. We may never perfectly realize it, but we n strive to come nearer and nearer to it. And if do, it is not irrelevant or impractical.

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?

Moreover, once they are really looked into, who going to say that the truths Christ taught and e issues with which he dealt, are remote or unreal? takes some nerve to dismiss the parable of the od Samaritan as antiquated. It takes some nerve write off the Golden Rule as passé. It may be rd to know what to do with the Sermon on the ount, in war time or at any time, but surely the t thing to do with it is to treat it as a back numr. Treating it so will not dispose of it. It will ver be disposed of. It speaks to humanity's condin. The truths it teaches are timeless. They are l truths for a real world, and the world will not cured of its sickness till they are acted upon. If u were to put it to a vote—if you were to ask o, since the world began, has had more moral influence than any other single individual—multitudes would unhesitatingly answer, Jesus Christ.

For another thing, are we sure that our ways of living in this rough, tough world are so practical after all? Are they working, or are they breaking down? You know the answer. You have only to look at the chaotic state of the world and you have the answer. Scrap the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount for the power politics of the superman or the super-state, try to build peace on the basis of superior force, not superior justice—that spells the defeat of all our hopes and brings doom in the end. Somehow everything we do that is cruel and combative and selfish sooner or later breaks down in personal life, business life, national and international life. It doesn't last. It won't work. Selfishness is the root principle of all neuroticism. No way works well in God's world but the morally right way. About this Christ is both right and relevant. He affirms the reality of love in face of the reality of power. Love, he says, is the groundwork of the universe, the ultimate meaning of life.

Are we sure that our hardheaded ways of living in this rough, tough world are so practical? Jerome Ellison, in his book *Report to the Creator*, which will well repay reading, comes up with this answer:

> These are the things we tell ourselves and one another, so that our shells may be toughened, so that compassion may seldom break through:
>
> This is a business corporation, not a charitable organization.
>
> Really, dear, I do wish you'd try to bear in mind on which side your bread is buttered.
>
> I don't see why we owe them any consideration. Have they ever shown any for us?
>
> And what thanks do you get?
>
> Moralize all you want to about the almighty dollar, but show me somebody who wouldn't like to have a few.
>
> She's of age; she can look out for herself.
>
> What do you want me to do—be idealistic and starve to death?
>
> With these maxims we take the trust and fun out of living, the gladness to see one another out of our meetings, the sparkle out of our eyes.
>
> This is the creed that drives love and confidence from the world: Use persons, love things.[3]

Witnesses for Christ's Way

Turn to the other, brighter side of the picture. Let me tell you about people who have tried Christ's way and found it real and relevant. Albert Schweitzer, beyond question one of the most gifted men of our time—endowed with physical, mental, spiritual powers far beyond the ordinary—testifies that, for him, "Jesus remains what he was . . . the supreme spiritual and religious authority." Again Schweitzer says that there streams forth from Jesus a mighty spiritual force that "flows through our time also. This fact . . . is the solid foundation of Christianity."

Charles Raven, to whom I referred earlier, has this to say:

> Week by week, in the ordinary situations of my daily round, I made trial of Jesus—in the office and the club, in the schools and in my rooms, in the woods and on the cricket field, alone and in company. There were many

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[3]Jerome Ellison, *Report to the Creator* (New York: Harper). Used by permission.

times when I forgot and many when I failed; there was very much in him and in the world that perplexed me, much that I could not understand; much, too, in my life that would have to be given up, still more that would have to be acquired. Sometimes it seemed almost hopeless, yet always some discovery of the adequacy of Jesus would cheer me to further ventures. Gradually the belief that he was the key to a right explanation and use of life, reinforced by repeated assurances from every field of activity, became first a working hypothesis and then a probability so secure as to be, humanly speaking, a certainty.

Take one more witness from our time, Jerome Ellison, the man I was quoting a minute or two ago. This is his testimony:

I had become a daily cocktail and evening drinker and was dependent for sleep on a powerful nightcap. I had discovered benzedrine and phenobarbital and lived a chemically regulated life—a pint of sherry and four phenobarbitals for sleep, three cups of coffee and a benzedrine to blast myself awake. On binge nights, which were unpredictable, my normal daily intake of perhaps a pint of spirits and a pint of wine, went on to satiation, which might require a quart of spirits or more. Intervals between debauches shortened—ten months, eight, six, two, six weeks and finally ten days. Then there came the blessed night, the cold and rainy night in November all those years ago, and the meeting at the Y.M.C.A., when You reached down and freed me from the desire to drink. And to the moment I write this, You keep me free!

Yes, someone may be saying, you can prove anything by counting heads. I am not asking you to count heads. I am simply inviting you to weigh testimony. Here are men who say that Christ is real, that in him there is a disclosure of the true meaning of life. You can accept or reject their testimony, but surely you will not do either without first weighing it.

Personal Application

Is there anybody here who wants to know *how* Christ becomes real? Do what these men did. Take definite steps in the matter. Wishing won't get you anywhere. Argument may clarify your thinking but it doesn't by itself result in religious experience.

Study the Christ of the Gospels. Watch him preparing himself for his life work, challenging the conventions and cowardice of his time, confronting his opponents in quietness and confidence, choosing his road and walking it without fear, facing certain death for the love of God and for the sake of man.

Read and reread the words of Christ. Meditate on them. Try to realize their meaning. Apply them daily to your life. You will be doing far more than reading words. You will find influences working on your mind and conscience and heart and will, influences that will enlighten and quicken and purify and empower you in ways that will be a surprise to yourself. A day thus lived is a day lived in a new spirit—the spirit of Jesus. If a single ray of light reaches you from Jesus, penetrates your being and influences your way of living, you are further along the road towards true belief in him than if you give unreflecting assent to a multitude of orthodox propositions which have no perceptible effect on your conduct.

To assent to the truth Christ teaches may be no more than a gesture. To live with it and to live by it, to have his mind and spirit more and more dwelling in you, is to have new insights, high values, clearer, bolder visions; it is to be discontented with what is un-Christlike anywhere; it to be new-created and to find all things made ne And it can happen to you. "Seek the Lord while may be found."

Personal Call

(Continued from page 19)

whole community. He went to the widow and sa "How could you have done this, in your beautif new home?" She let her eyes fall as she said to M Rutledge, "Jesus would." "Jesus would," meeti human need, regardless of circumstance or reput tion.

The third test is this: Does this personal c from long distance, from the infinite and eterr Spirit, send you out to create community? To crea fellowship, transcending barriers, lifting men a women above hurdles of caste and race, position a status and financial standing in life? Does it?

Creating Community

You wouldn't think that the New York telepho directory would inspire a poet, but some of y know that it has inspired one of our whimsical a yet penetrating modern versifiers, Christopher M ley. He thumbed over that huge volume, almost big as Chicago's now, Manhattan's telephone dire tory, and he wrote these lines:

No Malory of old romance, no Crusoe tale, it seems to n
Can equal in rich circumstance this telephone directory
How many hearts and lives unknown, rare damsels pini
for a squire,
Are waiting for the telephone to ring and call them to t
wire?
And some perhaps are stung with fear, and answer w
reluctant dread.
The message they expect to hear means life or death
daily bread.
Some wait to hear a loved voice say the news they w
rejoice to know,
At Rome 2637 J, or Marathon 1450.
A million hearts here wait our call, all naked to our dista
speech.
I wish that I could ring them all, and have some welco
news for each.

Well, you can. We have some fresh news fr God this evening. It's a personal call from long d tance to you and to me, to go out because of yo Christian faith and make some personal contrib tion above and beyond the call of duty. In t world, which is so rapidly being de-personalize go out and meet some human need; go out a create richer and more enduring fellowship.

Here at the end of the message will you take t text from the twelfth chapter of John? Jesus sa " 'Father, glorify thy name.' Then a voice ca from heaven saying, 'I have glorified it, and I w glorify it again.' And some standing by said, thundered.' And others said, 'An angel has spoke And Jesus said, 'Father.' " Amen.

Love's Double Duty

By Ralph W. Sockman

ON a certain occasion a lawyer asked Jesus, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" And Jesus replied, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment." And then he went on to add, "And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets." Why did Jesus add the second commandment to the first? Perhaps, we say at once, because the two together sum up the law. I think there was also another reason. Both these commandments stand or fall together. Each depends on the other for fulfillment.

Consider first that our love for God needs love for neighbor to fulfill itself. We have to test our love for God by our love for our neighbor. One might look at a beautiful sunset or up into the heavens and say, "I love God for his beauty." One might look at the good earth with its bountiful harvest and say, "I love God for his great generosity." But could he really love God if he did not love his neighbor?

The Supreme Test

Stephen Vincent Benét, in his poem *John Brown's Body*, tells of a sea captain in the African slave traffic who prayed piously and regularly but saw nothing wrong about his business. And tradition has it that Sir John Bowring, when he was governor general of Hong Kong, encouraged the opium trade with China. Yet Sir John wrote that tenderly beautiful hymn, "In the Cross of Christ I glory."

Because men have so often said they loved God, yet tragically did not treat their neighbors right, the Epistle of John flames out in these words: "If any one says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen." Jesus, in his picture of the last judgment, made it very clear that our love for him is proven by our attitude toward others. He separated the sheep from the goats, you remember, and the ones he sent to the right were those who had fed the poor, the sick, the naked, the imprisoned. And when Judas left the Last Supper, Jesus turned to the faithful eleven and said, "By this all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Learning of God's Love

Yes, we have to show our love for God by our love for our neighbor. This, of course, has often been told us. But now I am going to say something not quite so obvious: We have to learn love for God through love for our neighbor. How would a boy understand the love of God the Father if he had never known any parental care? If an orphan lad were put into an institution where he had no experience of love like that of father or mother—thank God, there are few institutions, if any, like that left in the world—but if there were, how would a boy or a girl in a place like that ever learn the love which God the Father has? Or suppose a person never did anything sacrificial for anyone else, never put himself out, never gave anything that cost him anything; how would you explain to him the life of Jesus and the principle of the cross? How would you make him understand why Jesus healed people who never thanked him, served people who never paid him and died for people who persecuted him? We learn what the love of God is through our experience with others.

Johan Bojer, the great Scandinavian novelist, some years ago wrote *The Great Hunger*, a book that I think was significant. In it he told of a man who went out from the city to make his home in the country. He had a beautiful and dearly beloved little daughter. A neighbor had a great, brutal dog, and the dog killed the little girl. At first the father's heart was broken. He was bitter toward the owner of the dog. He was utterly shaken in his faith in God. Then there came a famine in that region; and this man, whose daughter had been killed, took some of his own meager supply of seed corn and planted it in the field of the owner of the dog that killed his daughter. When he was asked why he

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RALPH W. SOCKMAN, *minister of Christ Church (Methodist) in New York since 1917, reaches countless Americans of all denominations each week through his network radio program, "The National Radio Pulpit," and through his syndicated newspaper column, "A Lift for Living"—the title also of a collection of these columns published in book form last November by Abingdon. A native of Ohio, Dr. Sockman graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University before studying at Columbia University for his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. Now an associate professor of practical theology at Union Theological Seminary and director of the Hall of Fame at New York University, he has been a visiting professor at Yale Divinity School where he gave the Lyman Beecher lectures on preaching in 1941.*

did it, he gave this answer: "I did it that God might live." The first time I heard that story it did not sink into me, but I think I see now what the author had in mind. It is only by such sacrificial acts that we can make God really alive to us. God is ever living, of course. But he becomes alive in us only when we do something Godlike for our neighbor. So I repeat, our love for God requires love for neighbor, both to show itself and to attain itself.

Now let us turn the tables to the other duty, "You shall love the Lord your God." Consider this fact, that our love for our neighbor requires our love of God. When we hear the Scripture read, "Love your neighbor as yourself"—let's be honest, now—how many of us think that is really practical? How many of us think that is just a counsel of perfection, something nice to talk about; but who could love his neighbors? Look at them! They are often unattractive. Is not love a spontaneous feeling that is called forth by the lovableness of a person? Now with the airplane we have made the world a neighborhood. How can we be expected to love the millions of Africa, or Asia, or even Europe? Yes, let's be frank. I have a feeling that often when we use the word "love" in the pulpit it strikes many of us as too sentimental to be real.

Intelligent Good Will

Let us look at it a moment until we see that God does not expect us to love our neighbors with the same type of love that we have for our intimate family. When Jesus speaks in the New Testament about loving father or mother, he uses the Greek word *phileo,* which means intimate, personal love—the kind of love you feel toward your wife, your husband, your child. But when he talks about loving your neighbor or your enemy, he uses another word, the Greek *agapao,* which means intelligent, consistent good will. It would be both unnatural and undesirable to have the same feelings toward everyone we meet that we have toward the intimate circle of our home. No, God expects us to have the kind of intelligent good will for our neighbor that we have for ourselves. "Love your neighbor as yourself."

How do we love ourselves? That does not mean that we always like ourselves, does it? The fellow who always likes himself is just blind to his own faults. He is rather insufferable, isn't he? Recently I heard two young women in my church talking about a certain young man. He looked pretty good to me. But they said, "Why I wouldn't want him. He's stuck on himself." When a fellow is "stuck on himself" he is stuck *with* himself. Nobody wants him.

That is not what the Bible means. I think C. S. Lewis of Oxford has made clear this distinction between loving yourself and liking yourself. He has said that however much he might dislike his own cowardice or conceit or greed, he went on loving himself. There has never been the slightest difficulty about it. In fact, the very reason why he hated those things about himself was that he loved the man. Because he loved himself he was sorry to find that he was the sort of man who did those things. That is the distinction. To love yourself is to want yourself to be worthy of your own self-respect. And when we see ourselves in the light of God's love, we get a heightened sense of self-respect. No matter what the crowd may say about us, no matter how humble our position, when we look at ourselves under God's light we see ourselves as ones for whom Christ died. We see ourselves as did Browning in "Rabbi Ben Ezra":

> All instincts immature,
> All purposes unsure, . . .
>
> All I could never be,
> All, men ignored in me,
> This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

Yes, God reveals us to ourselves as persons worthy of self-respect. We are immortal souls.

We get the kind of view of ourselves which Henry C. Link, the late psychologist, told us that a mother had for her twelve-year-old son. This boy had been bringing discouraging reports home from school. His grades were low and his mother became worried about him.

> When she admonished him for not getting higher marks, he had replied: "The teacher isn't worrying about me so why should you? She says that, considering my IQ, I am doing good work."
>
> "If your teacher isn't worrying," replied this mother who, it happened, had a master's degree in psychology, "then it is high time that I was." Thereupon she called the teacher who tried to explain that, in view of her son's IQ of 88, he was doing about as well as could be expected.
>
> "That is just what I was afraid of," insisted the mother. "If you do not expect more of him, no wonder he doesn't do better. In spite of his IQ I expect him to do better, much better. And what is more, I am going to see that he does."
>
> And she did, and he did.[1]

God Provides Incentives

God does something like that. He sees our IQs and our inequalities. He sees that some are ten-talent men and some are five-talent men, but he sees also our incentives; and God, you know, gets into incentives. He takes a boy like that one in Ohio who was so poor in his studies that his mother was told by the teacher, "Take him out of school. No use educating him." That boy turned out to be Thomas A. Edison, the electrical wizard. God looks at a man like Levi, the tax-gatherer, despised by his fellow Jews because he was serving the Roman government. Jesus walked past Levi and Levi's spirit began to stir as a chrysalis stirs, and pretty soon he was winging his way out to follow Jesus. He became St. Matthew. Jesus loved Levi into becoming St. Matthew.

Or think of that woman, taken in a sin that called for stoning. There she was, cringing before the crowd. At first Jesus, with the infinite courtesy of a gentleman, did not add to her embarrassment. He stooped and made some marks in the sand to keep from looking at her; and then, when she had somewhat recovered her poise, he looked at the crowd and said, "Let him who is without sin among

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[1]From the book *The Rediscovery of Morals* by Henry C. Link. Copyright 1947 by Henry C. Link. Published by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. Used by permission.

u be the first to throw a stone at her." No one rew. Then Jesus did look at her and said, "Has one condemned you? Neither do I. Go, and do t sin again." He showed the woman her own worth. Jesus took a little man, with a physically handi- pped body like that of St. Paul, and made him e creator of the culture of a whole continent. He ok the hunchback, Wilberforce, and so fired him th the cause of stopping the African slave traffic at he aroused England to its abolition. Yes, when see ourselves under God's light we see what it eans to love ourselves.

But now comes the crucial question: How can we e our neghbors? I suppose we might say one very actical first step is to get to know the neighbor tter. Very often, you know, we dislike people cause we have formed some prejudice against em through ignorance. You recall the oft-told ory of Charles Lamb, who had a dislike for a rtain person. He had never met the man, but he d not like him. One day Lamb was at a gathering nen the other person came into the room. A mu- al acquaintance asked, "May I introduce you to m?" "No," said Lamb, "I don't want to meet him. I met him I might learn to like him."

Friendly Sharing

You see the point. By getting better acquainted often come to like people whom at first we did t like. Traveling on the same commuting train ek after week we form a speaking acquaintance th people and call them by their first names, but at is not enough. Suppose one of those men goes d in business in some way. How quickly he is opped! Just to know people does not quite do it. ld facts still make cold words. Oh, we can get ser to people, get into contact with them, be in e same house with them. But that does not always rk. I lived in a boardinghouse at one time in my e. We sat at adjoining tables, but I can still re- mber the glares or criticism and the voices of ssip in that room. Of course I think the food had nething to do with our ill will, but just being under e same roof does not generate love.

Some years ago, in 1945 to be exact, I was in rkeley, California, at the Claremont Hotel for a nth. The hotel had a popular dance orchestra at summer under the leadership of Russ Morgan. ery night Mr. Morgan would close his program th the same tune. This was the tune that about e o'clock in the morning came wafting up to my om (I put that in so you would know where I s): "For your friends are my friends, and my ends are your friends; so the more we get to- her, the happier we will be."[2]

That is only partly true. We must get together a different atmosphere and that is what makes family, you know. They live in the same house d share the same things, but they are fused by ental feeling. One of the classic family sagas of nerica is that of the Taft family, the four broth- who formed the generation just before the late nator Taft. Their names were, as I remember, Charles, Henry, William, the former President, and Horace. Mr. Horace Taft wrote his autobiography some years ago and said this: "I have in my possession a letter written by my father to my maternal grandfather when I was born, and the letter ran like this: 'Little Willie's nose [little Willie was the future President] is out of joint because he doesn't like his new brother that's come. But we've made a deal with Willie. If Horace doesn't prove to be a good boy we'll send him to the orphan asylum.' . . . I never went to the orphan asylum."[3] Of course he did not. Why? Because he lived in a home where father and mother loved, where they sacrificed and where the children absorbed this atmosphere. Now precisely that is what happens to people in the family of God.

Brothers and Neighbors

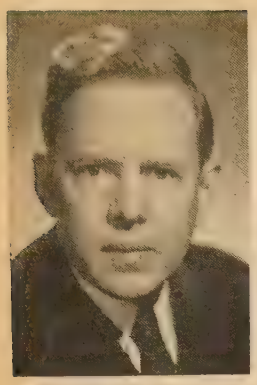
This is Lincoln's birthday. I think one of the great secrets of Lincoln's appeal to the people, and of his lasting greatness, was his imagination—his ability, as he sat here in Illinois behind the stove in the village store, to imagine how slavery touched the farthest ends of this nation. Then when he got to the White House he could see, in his imagination, how the war touched the last boy back home. He saw the long of it and the short of it. Lincoln saw our country as a nation under God. When we think of our brother as our neighbor, as one for whom Christ died, then we keep thinking about him and praying for him.

Suppose you drew a curtain across this Orchestra Hall tonight, so that I could not see you in the rear rows or in the gallery. There is one way I still could see you: if there were a mirror in this ceiling I could look up into that mirror, and that would enable me to look down into your places. That is a parable. The world is curtained off. We cannot see through on the sidewalk level. But when we go into our services of worship on Sunday, or on Saturday, and look up to God, the Father of all men—and remember he is that—it is like looking up into a mirror of love in the ceiling. It helps us to look down into the other person's place. And if we do it repeatedly and sincerely enough we sensitize our imaginations toward Him who could say, "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." That is why we must have this commandment, "You shall love the Lord your God," if we are to have the second commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

I have often quoted that now classic conversation between Henry George—I hold no brief for his tax theories, but he was a great humanitarian—and Cardinal Manning, the great English prelate. Henry George said, "I loved the people and that love brought me to Christ as their best friend and teacher." "And I loved Christ," replied Manning, "and so learned to love the people for whom he died." We can love God and see that we must love our neighbor, or we can set out to love our neighbor and see that we must have God's help. That is love's double duty.

[2] From the song by Russ Morgan, "The More We Get Together." Used permission.

[3] *Memories and Opinions*, by Horace Dutton Taft, founder and headmaster of The Taft School, Watertown, Conn. Used by permission.



The Choice Before Us

By Nels F. S. Ferre

Therefore choose life. Deuteronomy 30:19.

WE face many choices: a choice as to war and peace, a choice as to kind of economic life, a choice as to world order, even a choice as to survival, but none of these choices carries with it the urgency and the ultimate significance of our choice as to our kind of faith.

Faith at its center has to do with the meaning of life. It is a question of the nature of existence itself. No wonder our text hits us hard: "Therefore choose life." Faith is accepting or rejecting life, now and in the world to come.

Accounting for Our Faith

Before I present our concrete choices tonight I want to admit that God alone is judge of persons. All we may do is to confess positions. God alone sees the heart. He alone knows the intention of faith. We may not judge that we be not judged. Such refusal to judge persons, however, in no way absolves us from the terrible responsibility of accounting for our faith. The choice is ours. Our choice, too, is a witness and should be of some help to other people.

Then again, most of us belong to no one school of thought. We are human beings who feel the pull of differing positions. If we are both growing and maturing we also identify ourselves with people of various persuasions in order to understand them, to learn from them, and perchance to share with them something of what we see and know. I feel myself very much a part of each position I am to discuss, and I want to belong. Every one of us, if he is really honest with himself, wants to belong. At the same time my only full allegiance is to the central truth of what to me is classical Christianity. My conviction is that classical Christianity is true at its heart and can, if we let it, unite those who work at odds with each other because they are out of line in spirit and in content with the living heart of the Christian faith.

Before I tell you a parable of our present plight as Christians and declare the power of the Christian faith to unite us within its own reality, I want to remind you of two facts. 1) "We may be living," many competent observers say, "on the verge of the post-Christian era." 2) We are living also in th midst of an unparalleled hunger for religion.

If we can lay aside our Christian conviction and look at facts as they are now, we have to admi that we are facing today the possibility of the en of the Christian era. Karl Heim affirms that th continent of Europe is basically post-Christian Christian affirmations in Europe are no longer rele vant to most people, and therefore they are no even denied. Modern man there generally lives i a world where meaning itself no longer matter The active church in Scandinavia consists of a fe per cent of the population. In England possibly tenth or a bit better support the church. Be thes figures what they may, they do not dismay m What disturbs me is the fact that I know ho hollow is the faith of those who say they believ Both defensiveness and aggressiveness, in this cas are indicative of insecurity.

Hunger for Religion

On the other hand, do we not have in this cou try a religious revival of unprecedented proportion Is there not even a return to Christianity of im mense significance? Are we not told by the Gallu poll and *Life* magazine that both church attendanc and the construction of new churches are at an al time high? There are certainly numerous reliab signs that our age is desperately hungry for religio An anxious people is seeking refuge beyond man reason and strength in days of unendurable stre and fear. It is not too much to say that our ag is starved for faith. Would that this hunger we filled by a faith that can satisfy the whole man an that can actually change our situation! I have t admit that a very large part of our religious reviv is empty. Countless people are caught up in a ru for cover and carried with the crowd without then selves having a vital personal faith. We too kno how hollow much modern profession is. We are ope to a sudden collapse of faith, even in confessin circles, or to some new faith that will promise i tellectual integrity and social effectiveness.

I am sure, however, as far as any human bein can be sure—some people think too sure—that th Christian faith at its heart is true. What we nee to do is to find and make clear its central tru and reality. Therefore I want to bring you this pa able concerning the Castle of Classical Christianit By classical Christianity I mean faith in the Go who came as holy love in Jesus Christ, who die

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and rose again; the God who created the world and who reigns over it, even when not in it; who will bring to life again the physically dead, and who will consummate all things at the end in accordance with the mind of Christ. By classical Christianity I mean faith in the church as at its heart a supernatural community of those who have known the experience of being born again and who have become new creatures in Christ by the forgiveness of their sins and the acceptance of the Holy Spirit. By classical Christianity, in other words, I do *not* mean a full system of doctrines to be disputed, but the main Christian affirmations concerning God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, man, sin and salvation, and life everlasting.

False Positions

The Christian faith centers in Christ. Christ is God come to earth in a human being. The God who came is love. He is best known through the cross and the resurrection as suffering and victorious love. To all who believe him, who repent and are forgiven, God gives eternal life, both here and beyond death. Those who know such eternal life form a community of Christ, of free and full love, creative and redemptive. Such forever is the heart of the Christian faith. Such to me is classical Christianity.

Classical Christianity is flanked on both sides by false views of the Christian faith. Let us think of the classical Christian faith as the central castle in which true Christians live with deep satisfaction, a stronghold that they are bound to defend and a home in which is the kind of life that is best for all people. It is the true home even of those who are not within it. It is beset from without by enemies anxious to raze it because they mistakenly feel themselves threatened by it.

Of the false positions, two are on the right and two are on the left of the castle. On the extreme right are the Fundamentalists. They are the ones, bless them, who are stirred into great rage because the true defenders of the castle in this day of modern warfare are no longer using the cross bow. They are more given to crying "Heretic, heretic," at the true defenders and to shooting them in the back with their bows and arrows than they are to defending the castle itself with modern weapons and against the real enemies.

Fundamentalists

This is to say that the Fundamentalists want to identify true Christianity with a literalism of the Bible which is impossible for any honest and educated man of our day. We cannot believe in a world made six thousand years ago, in a flat earth with corners, or in a sun that goes around the earth. Nor can we believe that things in the Bible inconsistent with the love of God in Christ are right or Christian. Neither is he blessed or right who dashes the little ones of his enemies against a stone or who attributes the tortures of an eternal hell to the sovereign God of love.

Next to the Fundamentalists on the right side of the Castle of Classical Christianity stand the Neo-Calvinists, or Neo-orthodox. I don't like the word Neo-orthodox, because when Barth and Tillich are both included it doesn't mean anything. These believe in the castle, but they do not believe it needs defense or communication with the people who are attacking it. They cry: "Our castle is beautiful. Let us worship in it. It cannot be taken. Let us praise it and enjoy it."

The Neo-Orthodox

To interpret this part of the parable is to say that the Neo-Calvinists, such as Barth, do not believe in relating the Christian message organically to the world either in terms of defense or in terms of intercommunication. They insist on the principle of unconditional surrender on the part of the enemies. While they are right that the castle is its own best recommendation and defense, they do not see that the enemy outside is made up of those who belong inside and who can be reached and won by concerned communication. The Christian faith can win those outside when it is willing to show on every needed level that it is saving truth and that it can truly help and satisfy the very ones who are attacking. The Christian faith should both remain stoutly itself and at the same time also reach out to influence educational, social and civic behavior. I am more and more convinced that a church of God which in an age like this surrenders a prophetic function is a church that is treacherous to God.

Farthest on the left stand the Demythologizers. They believe that the Castle of Classical Christianity has no place in modern life. It can no longer be defended because it is no necessary part of the Christian faith. Therefore they have gone out on the field in front of the castle crying that the flag and the uniforms are what makes Christianity Christian. Out on the field they fight both the defenders of the castle—those who believe in an evangelical supernaturalism centered in Christ—and those who are arrayed against the Christian faith as a whole.

All Positions Hold Truths

Within this body of warriors stand great thinkers like Rudolf Bultmann in Europe and Paul Tillich in the United States, some of my best and closest friends (Reinhold Niebuhr does not belong there), who have become convinced that the objective structure of classical Christianity—a God beyond this world and an eternal life beyond this world—can no longer be believed in by men stringently trained in science. They believe, however, that the original faith of the early Christians was in the cross and the resurrection as the power to overcome all the enemies of human existence *in this life* by the power of Reality, the power for life and for love that are contained within the very ground of being. They keep therefore the symbols of faith and discard the castle with which classical Christianity identified these symbols. They give up the structure of faith while believing they have kept the faith itself.

Next to the castle on the left stand the Liberals. What am I going to say about them? They are busy with plans to put new conveniences in the

castle, to modernize it. They want new plumbing and central heating; some even want air conditioning. Then they want to invite the enemy outside to inspect the castle to see for themselves if the castle is not the best place to live.

Interpreted, this part of the parable means that the Liberals want to be accepted by those who use general methods of truth. They do not want to think of the Christian faith as different in kind from other truth, as any special revelation. They want instead to show that it is the fore-front of all truth concerning life's meaning. Christ becomes the great example and helper for man. He shows man what true humanity can be like. He contains as much of God as man can; and by accepting the God whose will and way we see in him, all men can find their way to heaven and home. Man is good because the God whom we see in Christ made him, and man's reason is a reliable tool for knowledge of salvation as well as for knowledge of how to navigate the seas. What man needs is to become serious and concerned with regard to the will of God. Then the God who is love will give him a new social order and will grant him at last either peace after life or life after death.

Christ Is the Heart of Faith

What then shall I say of this parable? I believe all these positions to contain genuine thruths, I feel a part of all of them; but all positions, too, need to come home to the castle. They need to move into the center. Fundamentalists are right in defending classical Christianity in supernatural evangelical terms. God in Christ as Creator, Redeemer and Consummator is our only hope. Christ is our gospel, the God who came to earth as universal holy Love and who waits and woos to save us now, if we will only let him. The Fundamentalists, however, need to listen to the Demythologizers. The extreme right needs to listen to the extreme left. The Bible needs to be radically rethought in terms of Christ and the best knowledge we have. Whatever in the Bible can be shaken by legitimate science, and whatever is contrary to the mind of Christ, is not part of the eternal gospel, but is rather something which the eternal gospel illumines. The Bible is very much a mirror in which we see our actual self, and see then our self as reflected in God's revelation in Jesus Christ, until we see both our actual self and the self whom we ought to be, and by the grace of God can become. Whatever in the Bible can be shaken by legitimate science is of earthly knowledge. The heart of the Christian faith, God in Christ as holy Love, cannot be shaken.

Learning from Each Other

Those on the extreme left, contrariwise, the Demythologizers—or shall I call them existentialists?—ought to recapture the vision of the evangelical supernatural faith. In my book *Faith and Reason* God let me point out that the structure of the classical Christian faith alone can satisfy the fullest and most stringent demands for knowledge, at least as far as supernaturalism's being true goes. If the extremes come together in Christ, we shall keep the heart of both the Fundamentalist and the Demythology drives: the drive for a full, saving faith and the drive for integrity of knowledge within faith.

Similarly the Neo-Calvinists ought to learn from the Liberals, even though they revolted originally against them. Any Neo-Calvinist movement that has not passed through the liberal concern for knowledge and for social responsibility becomes a brittle position. It becomes an isolationist position that denies the Christian faith at its heart. At the same time the liberal position has lost the Christian heart, God's own unique presence in Christ as Savior. It has surrendered the claim for a special revelation that is obnoxious to man who is dominantly sinful and in need of redemption. The sinner will not and cannot see the Christian revelation unless he repents and is born again. When he does so, his eyes are cleansed by faith. Let the Neo-Calvinist learn that the Christian faith, though distinctive, can and must be related to education and social responsibility, even though in an unexpected and revolutionary way. God's love comes also as light, even though as the subversive fulfillment of the expectations of the natural man.

Let the Liberal, too, return to the center of God's holy presence in Christ. When he does, he will find that his concern for the relevance of truth and for social responsibility is helped, not hindered, by Christ the Truth. He will have to reinterpret human nature as sinful in the stronger light of God's revelation in Christ, and the whole question of community and communication will be revolutionized.

Those who return to the center, I believe, will not quickly leave the castle. Christ is the answer!

Paths Toward Renewal

I propose four main ways toward a religious renewal:

1) Let us return to God through repentance and faith. There is no substitute for a believer. He who would come to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Such faith, however, is not arbitrary. It is not speculative. When we see the life of God in Jesus Christ we also have light for reason. God is truth. There is no alternative, I am convinced, more truly and competently capable of satisfying the need to know. He who dares believe and look shall find the truth he is seeking.

2) Let us try to forget about divisive words. Let them belong to the past. Why not be Christians in the most wide and yet definitely central meaning of the word. I do not like the term "supernaturalist," and even the word "evangelical" has now become colored with shades not entirely connoting the glad news of God in Christ as holy Love. Nevertheless I accept what both of these words centrally stand for, and certainly we all want the liberal openness to truth. My own term is getting to be "Incarnationism." With this I mean that God who is in himself beyond the world has yet truly come in Jesus Christ as universal, holy Love.

3) Let us also recover the high biblical under-

standing of the church as not only the work of God but as his very presence in the believer. Whatever helps make the church real and helps it spread is of God. When the church has Christ for its Head, it forgets its own life for the sake of the world, in imitation of its Master. The church of Jesus Christ is primarily concerned with worship, with acceptance of true Christian fellowship, and with winning the world for Christ. Such winning, however, involves the changing of the world according to the mind of Christ and with the power of the Holy Spirit. The church today, therefore, fails not only its task but its own true nature if it fails to break down barriers of race, religion, nation and class. The church that is genuine gives, helps and heals in all areas of life and to all conditions of men.

Faith Has No Substitute

4) Finally, let us raise the triumph-cry of pilgrims: This life is not all! God has provided a better to come! Whatever judgment must necessarily come after this life must not be belittled, but must be seen as within the eternal resources of the God of grace and God of glory. True faith in life after death gives us a new kind of life now. Eternal life involves now a concern for rightness of life. Nevertheless the Christian faith stands and falls with the faithfulness of God to all eternity. Faith has caved in on us for heaven has fallen. Faith will rise with power and triumph once again when we let God lift the heaven over this darkling earth. What lies ahead we cannot spell out. Ear has not heard it nor eye seen it. But we know that God is seen in the cross and resurrection as suffering and ever-victorious Love. Therefore we trust beyond seeing.

No evening is long enough to allow my sharing with you the reasons for my hope in God. They fill my life with quiet joy and liberate my reason. Faith fulfills reason and bids it traveling mercies. I know we can have a free faith with critical reason, we can believe in God and therefore in man, we can look for God's final fulfilling of his own purpose with us in the future and therefore enter *now* the more completely into that purpose. There is no substitute for true faith. With Paul I say, "Sirs, I trust God."

Born Anew

A Children's Sermon by Albert Willhouse

St. John Evangelical and Reformed, Okeene, Okla.

THIS morning we will consider a talk Jesus had with a man named Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a very wise and able man. He was one of the leaders of his Jewish people. And he had heard much about Jesus. He had seen Jesus do great things. Now Nicodemus' friends had heard and seen Jesus too. They said that He was a fake—that one should not pay any attention to Him. But Nicodemus could not do that. All the things he had seen Jesus do and had heard Him say made him listen and look all the more. Nicodemus knew that Jesus must have been someone special. He must have been someone God had sent to the people.

So one night when most other people were in bed, Nicodemus crept out of his own house down the street to the house in which Jesus was staying. Possibly Nicodemus was a bit afraid to knock on the door because it was so late. But he did knock and he was happy he did because Jesus wasn't angry with him for coming so late. Jesus was very kind and understanding and made him feel at home.

Nicodemus started talking to Jesus almost immediately, saying something like this: "I've been watching you, Jesus. I've seen many of the wonderful things you have done. You must be a teacher whom God has sent."

And Jesus answered in effect: "Nicodemus, unless you are born anew, you can not know how God works or what he is like."

Nicodemus must have thought to himself, "What is he talking about? Unless I am 'born anew.' " And then he answered something like this: "What is this all about? I have been born one time. And here I am, growing old. How can I be born a second time? That is a good one!"

But you see, Nicodemus did not understand Jesus. Jesus was not talking about being born like a new baby in a hospital. Jesus was talking about people changing and becoming different. You know what I mean. Sometimes we have a friend who always fixes her hair a certain way or has a certain kind of haircut and often wears her favorite dress or his favorite shirt. But the next time we see our friend, she has a new hair style and a new dress or he has a crew cut and a new shirt. And we say, "Why, I hardly knew you! You look so different!" Our friend has changed. He looks different. It is as if he had been born anew. It was something like that that Jesus was talking about to Nicodemus. Only Jesus was not talking so much about how you look and the way you wear your hair and the color of your dress. He was talking about the way you act and the things you do and the kind of boy or girl you are. "Unless you are born anew, unless you change some of your bad habits," Jesus was saying.

We all have bad habits. None of us are perfect. There are many things we do that we should not, and there are many things we should do that we do not. Jesus was saying that we should work on those bad habits. Get rid of them. Become a different person—a better, kinder, more helpful Christian boy or girl.

The Road to Blessed Immortality

By Benjamin E. Mays

THE scribes, the chief priests and elders, all joined in the chorus: "He saved others; he cannot save himself." They spoke in mockery and ridicule, in jest and scorn. They said in essence: "There are some things that even an omnipotent God cannot do. He saved others; he cannot save himself."

Were they right or were they wrong? Maybe they were right. Maybe there are some things that God cannot do. Here is a boy, trifling, good-for-nothing, lazy, with no ambition, no aim, no purpose, no ideals. It may be that God cannot make this lad into an upstanding man. Harriet du Autremont has beautifully said:

> No vision and you perish;
> No ideal, and you're lost;
> Your heart must ever cherish
> Some faith at any cost.
>
> Some hope, some dream to cling to,
> Some rainbow in the sky,
> Some melody to sing to,
> Some service that is high.

It may be that without the dream, the vision, the aim, the purpose, the ideals, without the rainbow in the sky, even God cannot make the lad into an upstanding man. Maybe the enemies were right. Maybe there are some things that God cannot do.

Here is a habitual drunkard or gambler. It may be that God cannot save this man from his gambling or from his drunkenness against his will. It may be that God cannot save the world from war as long as we put our trust in armies and navies, battleships and machine guns, airplanes and submarines, atomic and hydrogen bombs. It may be that God cannot save a man against his will.

I don't know. Maybe God, when he made man, faced a dilemma. Maybe God had to make man a person or make him a thing, a personality or a machine, a human being with a mind and a will or a piece of steel, a slave or free; and if free, a man must be free to choose good or choose evil, to choose truth or falsehood, free to choose the high road or free to choose the low road, free to choose God or the devil, heaven or hell, peace or war. Maybe God faced a dilemma when he made man. He elected to make man free—even free to destroy himself.

The critics were right. He saved others. Himself he could not save. What a marvelous thing! What a compliment! How wonderful it is to say that here is a Man who saved other people but could not save himself! What a marvelous thing! He saved others. Himself he could not save. They were right. Jesus was able to give seeing to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speaking to the dumb, walking to the lame, living to the dead. He was able to cast out devils and to save sinners, but he was not able to save himself from crucifixion and death. They were right. He saved others. Himself he could not save. How strange!

Martyrs to a Cause

It often happens that the people we struggle hardest to save are the people who crucify us. Jesus died for the Roman officials, but they participated in the crucifixion. He died for the scribes and Pharisees, but they had a hand in the crucifixion. He died for the members of the Sanhedrin court, but they shared in the crucifixion. How strange it is that often the very people that we seek to save, or the very people that we seek to help, are the people who crucify us!

I am thinking of Jesse Lazear′, the American physician who accompanied Walter Reed as a member of the commission which went to Cuba in 1900, just after the Spanish-American War, to test the theory that mosquitoes carry yellow fever. Jesse Lazear′ allowed himself to be bitten over and over again by mosquitoes, and he contracted yellow fever and died; but in contracting yellow fever and dying Jesus Lazear′ made it possible for scientists to find the source of yellow fever, and eventually a preventive. It can be said of Jesse Lazear′, "He saved others. Himself he could not save."

I am thinking of Noguchi, the great Japanese scientist who developed a vaccine for yellow fever, by which thousands, yea millions of people have been saved from yellow fever; yet Noguchi, on an expedition to Accra, on the Gold Coast of West Africa, died of yellow fever. It can be said of Noguchi: "He saved others. Himself he could not save."

I am thinking also of Abraham Lincoln, who waged

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a great Civil War, who preserved the Union, saved this great country from dividing, emancipated four million slaves and made it possible for American democracy to survive. Yet Abraham Lincoln could not save himself from the assassin's bullet. Lincoln saved others but Lincoln could not save his own life.

I am thinking of Mahatma Gandhi, who more than any other man made it possible for four hundred million Indians to be free and independent, and who more than any other man made it possible for fifty million untouchables to be lifted from a position of disgrace to a position of respectability. Yet Mahatma Gandhi could not save himself from the assassin's bullet. It can be said of Mahatma Gandhi that he saved millions, but he could not save himself.

I am thinking tonight of Drs. Charles and Will Mayo, who went up to Rochester, Minnesota, and established there one of the greatest clinics in the world. Dr. Will was an expert in surgery for perforated gastric ulcers. Thousands of people were saved because Dr. Will operated on them and saved their lives, but eventually Dr. Will was operated on for gastric ulcers, from which he never completely recovered. Dr. Will saved thousands but he could not save himself. His brother Charles also saved thousands of people—from pneumonia; but he died of pneumonia. It can be said of the Mayo brothers that they saved others; themselves they could not save. What a marvelous thing!

I am thinking of the thousands, yea millions of Americans whose bodies are resting tonight on the battlefields of the world—Europe, Asia, Africa—who gave their lives in order that this country might be saved from totalitarianism. It can be said of these millions who are now dead that they saved others but they could not save themselves.

Here is a woman giving birth to a child and in the process she loses her life, but the child lives. It can be said of many, many mothers that they gave life to their children but they could not save their own lives. What a marvelous thing! How wonderful, to be able to say, "He saved others. Himself he could not save."

All Want to Be Saved

Every man wants to be saved. No man wants to be wasted. No man wants to be destroyed. I think it can be truthfully said that the quest of the human spirit is a quest for some kind of salvation. Man wants to be saved from destruction and he wants to be saved from being wasted. To be saved is to be saved from waste or destruction, and every man wants to be saved.

We spend billions for arms. Why do we do it? Because of the desire on the part of the West, on the part of America, to be saved from naziism, fascism, communism, totalitarianism, for a democratic way of life. All life is a struggle and a striving on man's part to be saved.

Millions of people in Asia are dying of slow starvation. Their one great quest is to be saved from hunger, to have economic security. There are thousands, yea, millions of others whose bodies are diseased, and they, too, are seeking to be healed of their disease. A man dying of cancer is willing to, and does, spend all that he can get in an effort to save his life. He is in quest of salvation. A lonely person seeking wholesome companions is seeking a form of salvation. A sinner down on his knees asking God to forgive him is seeking salvation here and in the world to come. Every man wants to be saved. No man wants to be wasted. No man wants to be destroyed. And it is this ever constant urge on the part of mankind—insisting that the grave is not the end, that there is life beyond the grave—which gives further proof that mankind wants to be saved.

Now the question naturally arises, how can man best be saved? Man at his best is weak and frail. It makes no difference how much he knows, he is still weak and frail. It makes no difference how much economic security he has, he is still weak and frail. The high and the low, the great and the small, the rich and the poor, all move around this earth for a very short while, and then die. How can man be saved?

Man can best be saved in this life and for the world to come by giving himself to others, by giving himself to some great cause, to some worth while ideal, to some great truth, to some great institution, by giving himself to the highest and to the best that he knows, in obedience to God's will and in the interest of the common good; and when he finds the ideal, the truth, the great cause, he must bow down before it, worship it, idolize it, cling to it, cleave to it, give himself to it, as if it were very God. The only way any man can save his life is to give it away in the interest of others and in the interest of some great cause.

Jesus Our Only Hope

The enemies were wrong. Jesus saved himself by giving his life away. He saved his life by dying on the cross. Three days after the crucifixion the news got abroad that Jesus was alive again, and the disciples who had gone back to their occupation rallied to him again. A few days later Peter stood up at Pentecost and declared that this same Jesus who had been taken and crucified had been lifted up and made both Lord and Christ. Stephen shortly after that was stoned. Paul was converted on the Damascus road, broke with the bond of the law and made it possible for the Christian religion to be spread abroad. Today no man clothed in his right mind can deny that after two thousand years the only hope, the only salvation—not only for man individually but for races and for nations—the only hope for the world is in the life, the teaching, the resurrection, the crucifixion and the resurrection of a Palestinian Jew who died on the cross.

The critics were wrong. Jesus saved his life by giving it away, and the only way any man's life can be saved is by giving it away to others. That is what Emerson had in mind when he said: "See how the mass of men worry themselves into nameless graves, when here and there a great unselfish soul forgets himself into immortality." Jesus forgot himself into immortality. "For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life . . . will save it."

Today's Pulpit Must Promote Tolerance and Brotherhood

Changing Outlooks For Religion

By Albert McCartney

STANDING at the conclusion of another season of the Chicago Sunday Evening Club, we are disposed to make a reappraisal of the accumulated accomplishments of the past and to thank God and take courage for the future. My own professional life has run almost parallel to the life span of the Sunday Evening Club, and I am prompted as I review the years to speak of the shifting accents and changing shibboleths in the field of religion that stand out like mileposts along the way.

Speaking recently at the University of Minnesota on "New Vistas for the Historians," Arnold Toynbee began his address with the remark:

> One of the characteristics of human nature is the capacity for intellectual detachment. These are wonderful times. There are wonderful opportunities today for us to stand aside from ourselves and take a look at history both in the long range and the short range.

I dare say we will all confess to at least slight curiosity about the human history of which our personal lives are a part. I was impressed with this recently in reading *Chicago with Love*, by Arthur Meeker. There is nothing momentous about this volume, but I found it tremendously intriguing because it was a record of the times through which I passed and of personalities and events with which I was more or less intimately associated.

Revolutionary Age

Toynbee points out that we are both spectators and actors in the kaleidoscopic drama of harrowing but tremendously momentous events which have characterized our time. The fact is we are living through a very revolutionary age in which the pace of social change has been so accelerated that, like a motion picture film moving at a fast pace, life takes on the impression of a continuous blur. I submit that this is a very trite and commonplace statement about these changes, but it will be indeed surprising if posterity does not confirm the conviction that we are living through changes so revolutionary that it will be impossible to digest them within a single lifetime. The major problem of mankind will be to adjust to these changes and take advantage of the onward flowing current of the stream.

Across the years the pulpit has the habit of putting the emphasis on this or that feature of applied Christianity for a period and then passing on to ring the changes on some other feature that, for a time, absorbs the attention of the churchgoing public. At the turn of the century, the accent was still on the "Evangelization of the World in This Generation," spearheaded by the student voluntary movement. Its heralds were John R. Mott and Robert E. Speer, twin crusaders for the cause of foreign missions, of whose commanding personalities this platform has inspiring memories.

Changing Pulpit Themes

Ancillary to this enthusiasm in our churches for promoting Christianity beyond the seas, there was an awakening of the Christian conscience for the welfare of the underprivileged living right round about us in our crowded cities—an interest that found articulation in such institutions as Hull House and Chicago Commons, reminiscent of Jane Addams and Dr. Graham Taylor. The charmed word in that decade was "service."

It was during that first decade of the century that the temperance movement was gathering up that momentum which was to climax in the 18th Amendment. Thousands of pulpits spoke out boldly on the subject of temperance. Today a kind of paralysis has come over the temperance movement so far as the pulpit is concerned. What has become of those flaming brands that led the procession in days gone by, shades of John B. Gough, and Arthur Burrage Farwell, and the flaming Baptist Boynton? We go all out to gather in the millions for our tuberculosis drives, for cancer, for the heart, for polio and all down the line, but alcoholism is a scourge that today is claiming its victims by the hundreds of thousands, not along Clark Street but in the cultured fringes of the city. Not in ten years have I heard any pulpit inveighing against it!

It was about this time that world peace began to command the attention of the American pulpit. Sir Norman Angell sparked the preachers' interest when he put out his epoch-making volume on *The*

ALBERT MCCARTNEY *served five Presbyterian churches during the active years of his ministry, between his ordination in 1903 and his retirement a few years ago from the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C. His third pastorate, at the Kenwood Church in Chicago, brought him into the sphere of the Chicago Sunday Evening Club, on whose board of directors he served 1946-50. During World War II he was a commander in the Chaplains Corps of the U.S. Naval Reserve and worked with governmental agencies to procure chaplains and to coordinate their services.*

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Great Illusion. The logic of that volume was that by the very nature of war's destructiveness, there could be and would be no more wars. Then came August 1914, and the pulpit went all out to make the world "safe for democracy."

When the war ended the popular theme expounded from ten thousand platforms and pulpits throughout the land was the plea for the League of Nations. But we soon learned that the economic royalists seated in our congregations and on our boards of trustees would have none of it, and if we appreciated our meal ticket we would better lay off that controversial subject.

Pacifists and Chaplains

Then came the lush years between the wars when we entered the roaring twenties. The pulpit raged vainly against the rising tide of lust and license that was sweeping away so many of the ancient landmarks and moral moorings, and we reached desperately in every direction to find some theme that might strike a popular chord in the hearts of our money-making, churchgoing and ticker-tape-watching congregations. But God moves in a mysterious way and the crash of 1929 soon found work for idle Christian hands to do. That was a time when the church did its noblest service and brought the ministry of the church to the sorrowings and the sufferings of the people as the long depression swept up the flotsam and the jetsam of humanity across the very doorsills of our churches morning after morning.

World War II found us reluctant participants therein. Not a single popular song was born out of that war. But, responsive to the lure of the uniform and the opportunity of a fresh challenge, many of the clergy left their charges to become chaplains. The old pulpit shibboleths were becoming pretty well shopworn and the army experience was providing a new approach to men's hearts. But the approach of peace stimulated an anxiety in the hearts of the chaplains to get back to their pulpits, when suddenly the bomb dropped on Hiroshima and the pulpit took a new lease on life as we went all out to talk about "this atomic age."

The Ecumenical Movement

Thus, we have recalled some of the themes that each in its day kindled the fire and evoked the enthusiasm of the pulpit across these years. But we stand here not to look back but to look forward, for the future is as bright as the promises of God. Now that we are confronting the problems of a revolutionary decade in which we are not only spectators but ourselves the actors, may I venture to sketch out some of those areas of human interest that may command our attention and, I trust, evoke our enthusiasm.

For today and for the coming years there will be a growing consciousness of the ecumenical church. That is a word that has captured the imagination of the pulpit. We preachers have a habit of picking up catch words and catch phrases which convey little, if any, meaning to the man in the pew, and we are tempted to talk about the "relativity of Jesus," "frames of reference," "ecumenicity" and so forth. But no theology is worth anything that cannot communicate itself to the average church member. Many of us were carrying on the work of the Kingdom, so we thought, before we heard the word "ecumenicity." How were we ever able to preach the gospel to all the world without it? We used to speak of the missionary movement and the man in the pew knew what we were talking about, but now it is the ecumenical movement and we have to take a man off into a corner and explain it to him. Nevertheless, my friends, ecumenicity is here to stay and we would better learn to coexist with it. Its root meaning is "universal," and ecclesiastically it connotes world-embracing Christianity. Back of it is the New Testament concept, "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all."

Psychiatry Opens New Vistas

A united Christendom, a world-embracing church is a goal devoutly to be sought, and for many years to come the accent will be increasingly on unity, this fusion of the faith. Meantime we would do well to look about us in our own neighborhoods and try a little coexistence with those Baptists or Presbyterians or Catholics across the street. Unity will never come from the top but it may rise from the grass roots beneath. Meantime each separate denomination has its contribution to make to the total expression of Christian truth. Of this fact there is no more elequent witness than the Sunday Evening Club.

Reference has been made to the revolutionary nature of the period through which we are passing. We had in mind changes in the technological, industrial and political levels. But great changes are also taking place on spiritual levels where another field is waiting to be explored and promises an abundant harvest. I refer to the field of psychiatry. In our time the tribe of psychiatrists has increased like "grasshoppers from multitude." Their most competent pioneers have broken through the crust of the mind as they go about with their Geiger counters like uranium prospectors, delving deep into the subsoil of the mind and tapping the unfathomable subterranean abyss whence flow the artesian waters of genius, poetry and religious inspiration to refresh the life of mankind. With increasing research and trained personnel, the pulpit is thus confronted with a vastly expanding horizon. The challenge is intriguing for there are spiritual depths that are yet unplumbed.

Increased Church Attendance

Another of our charmed words today in pulpit and press is "spiritual recovery." Certainly religion is on the front page as never before and cynics can smile as they may about "piety along the Potomac," but in over a quarter of a century in residence there I can testify that I have seen the tide rising. It is indeed good to see our churches crowded and many ministers can "point with pride" to the neces-

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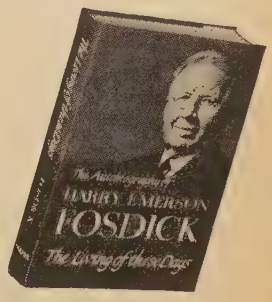

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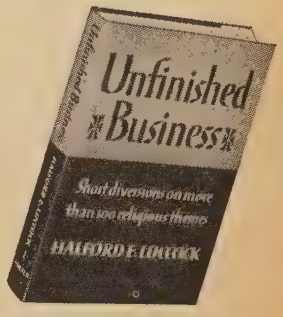

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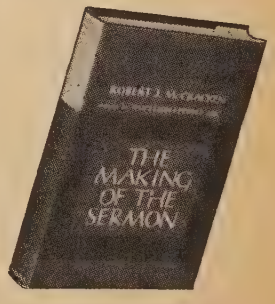

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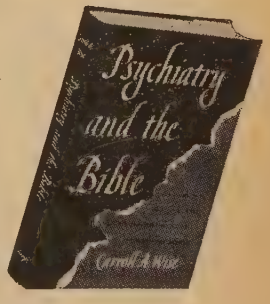

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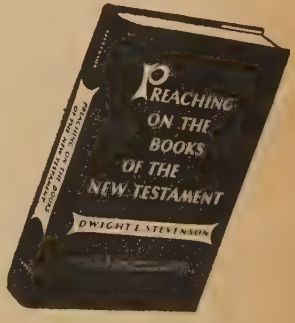

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sity of holding a nine o'clock service or providing for an amplified one to take care of the overflow. (I notice, however, that we do not point with equal pride to the fact that so many lights have gone out in the evening service.) Certainly the public press in these last years has become more than generous to the churches; but, discarding the eternal fitness of things, their photographers are constantly crashing the very Holy of Holies to catch some prominent personality in the very act and article of receiving the Holy Sacrament—all of which is an utter abomination and desolation in the house of God, for, after all, there is no salvation by photography.

Let us be grateful for the increase in church attendance that statisticians and ministers proclaim—such things the world can understand. But herding people into membership of the church without any adequate understanding of what it is all about and then leaving them to fend for themselves with the world, the flesh and the devil, is no sure sign of spiritual growth. It is much easier not to be a Christian today than it is to be one in a vital and dedicated sense, for still it is true that "the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life." The pulpit ought to be honest enough to proclaim the gospel invitation in such a light that people may clearly understand that it costs something to be a Christian in this tumultuous and changing era.

Fruit for Repentance

All of this upsurge in church attendance and the accompanying outlay in church buildings, the increased sales of Bibles and religious literature, and the popular demand for quasi-religious books presents us with a strange paradox, considering the moral flabbiness that seems to characterize so much of our public and private behavior. Conspicuous in many facets, it is seen for example in parental and juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, narcotics, violence, the growing gangsterism and vandalism in our high schools, and race riots in our Christian communities. These are conditions to which we cannot point with pride, and the question arises, To what extent are these great increases in church interest reflected in the quality of Christian living and thinking? Immanuel Kant did not bother much about the ethics of Christianity but he talked about the "fundamental, moral imperative." That is the thing. I am bound as a Christian to choose the right, no matter what it costs. Let us not be too vocal about our "spiritual recovery" until we as a people bring forth more fruit meet for repentance.

Conflicting Philosophies

Another of the major tasks that will challenge the dedicated ingenuity of our church leadership in the coming decade will be the proper procedure and technique for Christianity to use in confronting globe-girdling atheistic communism. Here the minister of the gospel of grace and charity confronts a dilemma. His missionary instinct is to embrace and cherish all mankind but his sense of righteousness recoils from the cruelties and injustices of the Kremlin. So we are face to face with an out-and-out conflict between two opposing and divisive philosophies of life and government. With poverty and hunger paralyzing one half of the world and comfort and luxury paralyzing the other half of the world, the natural, spiritual and moral repercussions are eating right down to the very heart of man's moral and spiritual integrity.

Now you cannot counter a philosophy so contrary to Christianity as atheistic communism unless your society is composed of individuals whose convictions go deep down into the springs of the heart and thinking. The task of the Christian church is to stimulate man's sense of his individual accountability to God and to his brother man, remembering the two oldest questions in the Bible: "Adam, where are you?" and "Cain, where is Abel your brother?" First, "Where do you stand in relation to God?" and second, "How do you stand in relation to your fellow man?"

Expanding Horizons

The Lordship of Christ must begin in the soul of the individual, for the Kingdom of Heaven is within you. That brings us to the plain conclusion that the task of the church today is exactly what it has been in the past and what it will be tomorrow and the day after tomorrow: to wit, the changing of men's lives, the conversion of souls, the winning of individual men and women to a commitment to Jesus Christ and the training of their children to know him and his righteousness.

I have suggested but a few areas in which the great evangel will find fruitful soil, and they simply give a hint of the ever-expanding horizons for the pulpit today. I envy the young men who are coming on at this time to take over those responsibilities. The problems confronting us are confusing, profound, staggering. Certainly the nations are in turmoil today. The cauldron of discontented peoples is boiling over all through the East.

Message of Brotherhood

The problem of living together as a single family on this rapidly shrinking planet is simply terrifying. The media of communication—the movies, air transportation, the press—the wars, have made the peoples of the East familiar with the existence of a richer life, and they are reaching eagerly for their share. Peoples who for centuries have accepted suppression and exploitation at the hands of the colonial powers are awakening as from a long, long sleep to the possibilities of a richer life, and national instincts are asserting themselves. For centuries the peoples of the earth have been strangers to one another; now almost in a single generation, we have become next-door neighbors physically, but our hearts and minds are still far apart. What mankind needs just now is Christian effort to become acquainted with one another, and that must be the dominant note for the pulpit to re-emphasize in decades to come. Brotherhood—this rose-red republic of Christ—will be a long time in coming to pass, but meantime the Christian pulpit must keep pleading for the spirit of tolerance and keep proclaiming the message of brotherhood as expounded

and exemplified in Jesus Christ. We dare not ntent ourselves with the role of spectators of the rtentous drama that is unrolling before our eyes. e must become actors in it ourselves. We must try understand this emotional outreaching for basic man rights and human techniques and human eedoms, try to value the people of other races for eir intrinsic worth and the contribution each may ake to civilization as a whole. Only in such a spirit all we be able to build the world order for which e plan and preach and pray.

Prayer at Table

ALMIGHTY God, as we meet within the deep and abiding fellowship of thy Holy Spirit, we ay that thy church in every land may find the ity which thou hast ordained, and so enabled to ing all men to the saving knowledge of thy birth; d for ourselves we pray that, as we receive this od and drink, we may learn in gratitude to be mpler in our obedience, and more faithful in our rvice, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—*obert Mackie, former Associate General Secretary, ordl Council of Churches. At January 1956 con-ntion of Student Volunteer Movement, Athens, hio.*

God of All Greatness

Tune: Toulon

GOD of all greatness, who hast greatly wrought
In starry space and in the soul of man,
Help us to trace the pattern of thy thought,
Building according to thy perfect plan.

God of all greatness, who hast greatly cared
That saints and prophets be our spirits' guide,
Grant us the consecration they have shared
So that our heritage be magnified.

God of all greatness, who hast greatly loved,
Giving thy world salvation through thy Son,
Now may our love in ministry be proved:
Through us today, O God, thy will be done.

God of all greatness, who hast greatly blessed,
Thine be the Kingdom as in heav'n above;
Thine be the power by thy world confessed;
Glory be ever thine, great God of Love.

ELIZABETH KNOBEL.

[*This hymn was awarded first place in the alumni centennial hymn competition conducted by the Chicago Theological Seminary last year, and is used here by permission. The 70-year-old daughter of a clergyman, Miss Knobel lives in an Evanston, Ill., home for the aged. In 1954 she wrote a centennial hymn for Evanston's First Methodist Church, host that year to the World Council of Churches.*]

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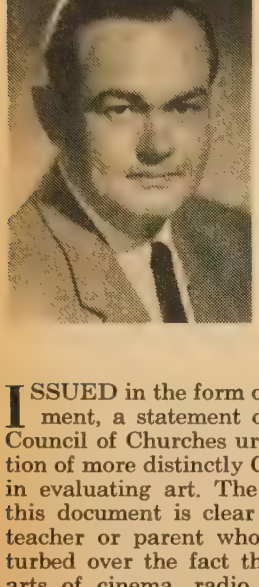

Protestantism and Art

By Alvin Schutmaat

ISSUED in the form of a study document, a statement of the National Council of Churches urges the cultivation of more distinctly Christian norms in evaluating art. The importance of this document is clear to any pastor, teacher or parent who has been disturbed over the fact that the popular arts of cinema, radio, television and fiction often make a stronger emotional and moral impact on the lives of our young people than does the home or the church. Unfortunately, we have given little attention to the cultivation of a Christian attitude toward art.

Current popularity of religion as a subject for novels, films and popular songs has not made our task any simpler. For it is not always easy to explain why some "religious novels" are thoroughly pagan, and why some films which do not mention religion have considerable religious significance. Clearer orientation in this field will require study.

The National Council's statement, however, is concerned with something more basic than Christian orientation in the popular arts, important as that may be. The council would like to have us study the fundamental relationship between art and religion in modern society. This is the first time, to my knowledge, than an important religious organization in America has called upon us to explore the deeper aspects of art in its relation to religion. American theologians have paid scant attention to this complex subject. That the churches should now be invited to study the matter is surely significant; the more so if there is any genuine response to the invitation.

Making a Start

A great many Protestants are likely to feel that there is something singularly un-Protestant about a study of the relationship between art and religion. Protestantism has indeed produced great works of art and great artists: not only Bach and Milton but on a somewhat lower plane Bunyan, Donne, Melville, Hawthorne and a great many others who have been, in a real sense, Protestant artists. Nevertheless, there has never been in our tradition a conscious striving for the integration of art and religion, nor any profound speculation as to the relationship between them.

It is thus somewhat difficult for us to find a starting point for a Christian evaluation of art. Protestants rarely find illumination in Thomas Aquinas' pleasant discourses on the delights of art, for he defined the nature and function of the medieval arts within a social and philosophical framework which was radically different from our own. If we wish to consider the matter of art and religion we had best begin here and now.

A Mode of Spiritual Awareness

We are confronted with art today as a highly individualistic, self-conscious activity, which claims for itself the same autonomy that philosophy and science claim for themselves in our modern world. The Protestant churches have few points of contact with serious art. Nor do we have any great aptitude for conscious "cultural integration." In our colleges and seminaries we have achieved a high degree of creative interaction mainly with those areas of life—science, politics, ethics—which have presented a serious and often immediate challenge to our traditional beliefs. Art has been outside the sphere of our interest, for we have never considered it a serious threat to the religious life.

Nevertheless there is among us a growing awareness of the need for some kind of fruitful interaction between art and religion. We realize that there is something wrong when a faith which claims dominion over all of life finds little expression in art, and finds little in art that is relevant to its own message.

Protestant theologians and educators have often told us that we have a great need for art as an instrument of vision. Tillich has shown us why theologians must lean so heavily upon art; for art, more than philosophy or science, "indicates what the character of a spiritual situation is." And in a more intimate way, genuine esthetic perception can give depth and scope to our religious life.

"Beauty," as Santayana said, "is a manifestation of God to the senses," and art, as created beauty, is a kind of natural revelation. For some, the esthetic vision of divine perfection is so abstract as to be almost meaningless. But on the human plane we can more readily experience art as a mode of spiritual awareness. In the imaginary world of a painting, a poem or a novel we often gain unique insight into the meaning of life. The harmony established within the little world of a work of art—its temporary resolution of life's conflicts, its momentary illusion of perfection—often gives us a deeper and clearer understanding of our own life and its potentialities. It is a kind of understanding that no philosophy or theology can give us.

We need the arts for stimulating and cultivating our religious imagination. The ability to see harmonies and relationships among people, things and events is surely God-given. There can be no love of one's neighbor without imagination, nor any love of God. How can a man grasp for himself the reality of Christ without a lively imagination? Pastors and teachers often fail to raise us to the heights of imagination which the gospel demands and prefer to reduce the gospel message to prosaic formulas. That is why we are often considered a people without visions, mysteries or dreams.

Expression and Communication

The church needs art as a meaningful form of expression. Van Ogden Vogt has often warned Protestantism that "a spiritual movement which does not find expression in the arts cannot attain self-consciousness, dominance or survival." His case seems somewhat overstated until we consider that Christian belief is indeed strengthened through a wide and varied expression on every level of life; the imaginative level can hardly be excluded. The Puritan preachers who rejected pictorial and plastic art nevertheless filled their austere meetinghouses with the impassioned poetic imagery of the Holy Scriptures; for the human imagination in one way or another, must be fed.

The church needs art as a unique form of communication. True art springs from the depth of human consciousness, and speaks with the unmis-

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ALVIN SCHUTMAAT, *director of the American College (Presbyterian) of Bogota since 1949, first went to Colombia in 1946 as a missionary, following his graduation from McCormick Theological Seminary. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Michigan and is now working toward a doctor's degree in church history at the University of Edinburgh.*

kable accent of sincerity and realism. eligion appealing through art has a nique function in our age of unbelief. oets like Eliot and Auden, who have und a spiritual center in the midst the confusion of our age, speak to us ore intimately and convincingly than e professional theologians.

There is always the danger of con-sing esthetic sensibility with genuine eligious devotion. Art, within or with-ut the church, is a subtle tempter. oth art and religion seek to achieve armony—one within the imagination, e other in life itself. Both weave a nd of spell, and, unlike philosophy nd science, grip our intellect and notions in a mysterious, intimate way. ut in art there is no real surrender the self, no bending of the will to a gher will. Who has not, at one time another, mistaken art's sense of nality and perfection for the certainty nd peace that only religion can give ? The temptation of estheticism, like at of intellectual or spiritual pride, is ne of the perils of a full Christian life.

Protestant Contributions

When we ask ourselves what Ameri-n Protestantism has to offer art, we ust answer with great humility. We elieve that the Christian gospel has exhaustible riches to offer art, but we ust admit that the churches have gen-ally been more of a hindrance than a lp to those artists who seek a creative ith. We can take little of the credit r the contemporary religious renais-nce in the field of art.

Before the beginnings of our religious vival in America, novelists and poets Europe had begun to explore the ebrew-Christian tradition for its phil-ophical and poetic values. Critics adually abandoned the strange as-mption that religion is no longer a oper subject for art. Karl Shapiro nd other poets have wrestled with e problem of belief and have reached e conclusion that whether a poet be-ves, and what he believes, is a vital atter; for the very images which are e stuff of poetry are pale and lifeless less they are informed with a firm lief.

In their spiritual explorations a few ets and novelists have found in Chris-nity a great deal more than they re looking for; and in their art the yth" that was pronounced dead has me to life with new relevancy and or. Christianity during the past two cades has had able and distinguished presentatives in the field of art. audel and Mauriac in France, Eliot d Auden in England have been ong the most influential. The latter o may be called Protestant in a lim-d sense, but we cannot deny that the igious revival in art is largely Cath-c and European.

There are a great many American ets who, like Robert Frost, Carl ndburg and Marianne Moore, bear imprint of their Protestant origin. t they can hardly be called Chris-n or Protestant poets. "Presbyterian and Poet" was the caption under a portrait of Marianne Moore on the cover of *Presbyterian Life*. The "and" is significant. Miss Moore does not hesitate to call herself a Presbyterian, but not a Presbyterian poet, for she cannot identify her art with a form of sectarianism—not even the refined and respectable sectarianism of the Presbyterian tradition.

Opportunities in Ecumenicity

Our failure to capture the creative mind is not surprising, for the catholic faith which is to be found beneath our denominational pecularities seldom emerges with clarity and power. It is not engraved so indelibly upon our childhood consciousness as to become alive and active in our mature imagination. Thus the vague faith which the Protestant artist neither affirms nor rejects is often diverted into channels of extreme individuality or eccentricity.

The churches of America must offer a new generation of artists a faith of truly catholic dimensions. The fruits of ecumenicity are many and varied. A truly Christian art in our day, the flowering of a renewed faith, is not to be despised.

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Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

It Still Is The Dump

HOW we love to prettify our language! That low-brow comeback, or, as some of my more elegant friends would style it, that "Philistine reaction," was mine one afternoon this past summer on Cape Cod when I read in the local paper of the proposal which had been made the week before in the town meeting of a near-by community. The proposer of the motion had been in deadly earnest. There was a matter, which, late though the hour was, simply must be faced. It was of vital import to the welfare of the fair town in which it was their happy lot to be privileged to live. The matter was, he finally got around to making clear, that the town dump should not be referred to in such coarse and plebeian terms. It should hereafter be styled the "disposal area." This, he continued, would be certain to "give it more class." It was further reported that he had been highly indignant when certain lewd fellows of the baser sort had indulged in rude and raucous laughter.

Trend of the Times

Well, why not? Surely he was strictly in step with the fife-and-drum corps leading the procession of crusaders on their quest of the rhinestone-set grail containing the almost-real genteel. We have watched "rest rooms" become "comfort stations" or, more elegantly if less accurately, "smoking lounges" and "powder rooms." "Undertakers" many years ago rebelled at that low, coarse word and insisted that they were "morticians" or "funeral directors." Those selling or renting houses, apartments and the like instantly joined the happy throng; they were not "real estate men" but "realtors." Janitors have become "custodians" or, better yet, "superintendents of grounds and buildings." Clerks and other employees are, of course, no longer that. Rather they are "our fellow workers."

Weakened Language

This weakening of the language—for surely that is in essence what this prettifying amounts to—may be understandable but it is, at least to me, far from impressive or even attractive. Shakespeare was undoubtedly right, "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Yes, indeed, saltily commented the editor of the local paper which had carried the news story of the tizzy caused by the proponent of the "disposal area" *née* "dump," and said dump will continue to smell like a dump until it is cleaned up. Tinkering with the name won't help one little bit.

An Ecclesiastical Defect

Churches and preachers are not conspicuously immune from the still-current disease. Sunday schools, not to mention Bible schools, have in no small numbers ascended, or been boosted, to the higher lands; they are now "church schools" or "departments of religious education." In the majority of them the subjects remain the same, and are as poorly taught. Only an occasional die-hard can without ecclesiastical blushes continue to use such low-brow terms as "auditorium" and "table," quite regardless of the fact that that is precisely what they are and of the further conveniently blinked fact that often the more plush and elegant words "sanctuary" and "altar" stand in fundamental opposition to the ecclesiastical history of the groups to which so many of their purveyors belong.

Nor in realms ecclesiastical any more than in the Cape Cod town meeting is this simply the record of a passing stage between awkward adolescence and a somewhat more steady adulthood. The process is still at work. Only a short time ago I was somewhat startled to hear from the pulpit the word that the congregation would find, as they left the sanctuary, new copies of the *Secret Place* (or was is the *Upper Room*?) on a table in the "narthex."

Modern Clerical Terms

One must, I suppose, grow in tolerance and vocabulary, as well as in grace and wisdom. It was simply that I found it fearfully hard to think of the little entryway at the foot of the stairs leading up to the auditorium—my blushes, the "sanctuary"—and in front of the door of this singularly lovely old meetinghouse, as a narthex.

Some time later, while talking with a group of preachers, I was even more startled to learn of the tragedy that had befallen the church edifice of one of the gentlemen. During the past week, in consequence of a sudden and very heavy storm, the roof had sprung a leak and the water coming in had stained very badly the "ree-ree-dose." His building was of the sort commonly styled the "Akron plan." For the life

(Continued on page 45)

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Any commitment to Him must satisfy the reason. At times the author writes as if there might be no faith in revelation. But are there not divine commands, as well as sound ideals, that are transrational? Then again he speaks of the "Omnipotent Pedagogue" and says that "God coerces the learning process," as if man must learn His will despite himself. An interplay of

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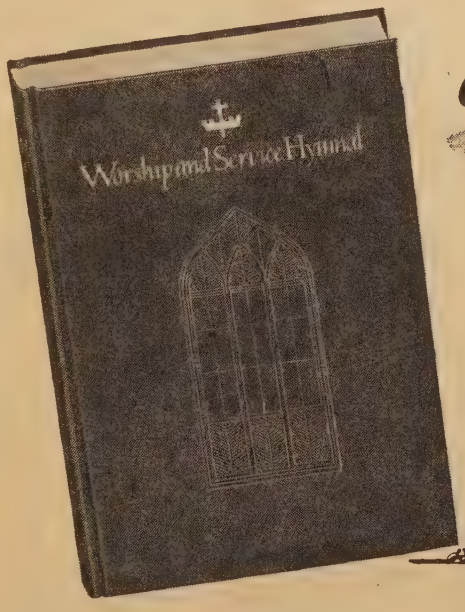

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doubt and faith, skepticism and commitment runs through the school of life, as God sustains, corrects, prods and uplifts humanity. No matter how stupid an individual, or how unregenerate a nation, God will win mankind to its true destiny. It's a glorious vision, but I would doubt it were it not for Christ who transcends my vision.—*Allen Keedy, First Congregational, Norwood, Mass.*

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TAKING its title from a quotation by Edwin Markham, "Choices are the hinges of destiny," this book of 17 sermons is marked by simplicity, biblical clarity, directness and sparkle. To this reviewer the most stimulating sermon is "America Needs the Shepherd," in which is this typical Loew expression: "The sheep doesn't set out to hunt the shepherd. It's the other way around."

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THE MOMENT BEFORE GOD. *By J. Heinecken. Muhlenberg, 386 pages, $5.95.*

IN the spirit of the child's famous book review ("This book gives me more information about penguins than I care to have"), it would be tempting to dispose of this book. It is long, it is relatively expensive, it tells a great deal *about* Kierkegaard. But to dismiss it lightly would be to miss the point of the book, in its attempt to lead *through* Kierkegaard and in particular through one aspect of his thought, the problem of becoming (or being?) a Christian. Of all the secondary literature on the subject, this commends itself most to preachers. From time to time in schoolmasterly fashion Professor Heinecken takes the parson aside lest a point be lost on him.

There need be no question that Heinecken is thoroughly steeped in the writings of the Dane. He can even speak a sort of 20th century Kierkegaardese. Aware of the pitfalls of interpreting so complex a figure, he avoids most of them. Perhaps he is uncomfortably neat in the way he lifts Kierkegaard into Lutheran categories or terms by translation, e.g., "theology of the cross," "distinction between law and gospel," concept of the "calling"; but this will only jar the expert. The strongest chapters are those that are waiting to be preached: "Awe Before God," "The Forms of Despair," "Christianity Is Suffering," "The Christian Hope."

The Moment Before God is sufficiently appealing to distract one from time that could be spent on reading Kierkegaard. This is a compliment to Heinecken but not an unmixed blessing for the student. Put it this way: if the reader doth solemnly promise to read a half dozen pages of Kierkegaard to every one of Heinecken, let him enjoy this book and let it help him, when preaching, to lead his hearers to tremble anew in the moment before God.—*Martin E. Marty, Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, Arlington Heights, Ill.*

It Still Is the Dump

(Continued from page 40)

of me, sympathetic though I strove to be, I found it hard to visualize that "stained reredos," even in the two-syllable form which Webster seems to prefer.

When Winston Churchill called his people to meet a challenge that was real and demanding, he called a spade a spade, and spoke of "blood, sweat and tears." He did not talk about "sanguinity, perspiration and lachrymation." It would seem to me that he is a better guide for those who from Sunday to Sunday call their congregations to a never-ending combat than is the nameless champion of the "disposal area."

P.S. The piece of ground in Chatham still continues, I am informed, to be, both officially and unofficially, the town dump.

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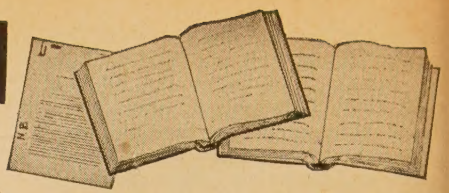

HE had been a Presbyterian and was now an atheist. He spent Sunday, as he spent most of his time on weekdays, working in his garden. But one curious trait from his Presbyterian youth survived. He always, on Sundays, gardened in a different, and slightly more respectable, suit. An Ulster Scot may come to disbelieve in God, but not to wear his weekday clothes on the Sabbath.—*C. S. Lewis,* Surprised by Joy.—*(New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955).**

THE Bedouins have a lovely greeting *"Marhabba*—Wide space round you!" to which the one greeted replies: *"Marhabba t'nane* — Twice as wide space round you!" That space is lacking in the life of these [delinquent] youths.—*From* Journey into a Fog *by Margareta Berger-Hamerschlag, copyright 1956, Margareta Berger-Hamerschlag (published by Sheed & Ward, Inc., New York, 1956).**

NO doubt, every historian has his own personal angle of vision, and there are also different schools of historical thought which have their characteristically different sectarian outlooks. We must examine these differences between one school of historians and another; but it may be best to start by considering what it is that all historians, in virtue simply of being historians, will be found to have in common.

The historian's profession, whatever he makes of it, is an attempt to correct a self-centredness that is one of the intrinsic limitations and imperfections, not merely of human life, but of all life on the face of the earth. The historian arrives at his professional point of view by consciously and deliberately trying to shift his angle of vision away from the initial self-centred standpoint that is natural to him as a living creature. . . .

But the slightly widened horizon which the historian's angle of vision opens up has displayed different pictures of the universe to historians of different schools. So far, there have been two fundamental alternative views.

One of these two views sees the rhythm of the universe as a cyclic movement governed by an impersonal law. On this view the apparent rhythm of the stellar cosmos—the day-and-night cycle and the annual cycle of the seasons—is assumed to be the fundamental rhythm of the universe as a whole. This astronomical view of history provides a radical correction of the bias towards self-centredness at the price of taking the significance out of history—and, indeed, out of the universe itself.

The other fundamental view sees the rhythm of the universe as a nonrecurrent movement governed by intellect and will. The play of intellect and will is the only movement known to man that appears to be unquestionably nonrecurrent; and on this view the fundamental rhythm of the universe as a whole is assumed to be identical with the rhythm in the career of an individual human being. It is assumed to be a drama that has a beginning and an end, that is punctuated by crises and by decisive events, that is animated by challenges and responses, and that unfolds a plot like the plot of a play. This volitional view of history gives history the maximum of significance, in contrast to the cyclic impersonal view; but it does this at the risk of tempting the historian to relapse into the self-centredness—innate in every creature—which it is the historian's mission to transcend.—*Arnold Toynbee,* An Historian's Approach to Religion *(New York: Oxford, 1956).**

TO Mother, praying to God was not merely asking him to bless her children. It meant waiting on him. With her, religion was not a one-way street. She lived according to his precepts to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk in spirit humbly with him. She often emphasized to me that we should not ask God's help if the request would hurt someone else.

I can see her now, quite ill, a few months before her death. She had an unusually active mind and was greatly concerned about the nation. The year 1931 was a memorable year in more ways than one, to me. It was the year that the Japanese renewed and enlarged their aggressive program against China in the now famous Mukden incident of September, and the telltale traces of the hand of aggression could already be detected earlier in the year. One day while talking to her, a thought which I considered bright occurred to me.

"Mother, you are so powerful in prayer, why don't you pray to God to destroy Japan in an earthquake so that she can no longer harm China?"

She turned her face away from me, and then replied: "Don't ask me to pray to God to do anything that is unworthy even of you, a mortal. 'Vengeance is mine,' saith the Lord. It certainly isn't yours."—*Madame Chiang Kai-shek,* The Sure Victory *(New York: Fleming H. Revell).**

FOR the first time I examined myself with a seriously practical purpose. And there I found what appalled me: a zoo of lusts, a bedlam of ambitions, a nursery of fears, a harem of fondled hatreds. My name was legion.—*C. S. Lewis,* Surprised by Joy *(New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955).**

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Pulpit Post

) in Recruiting

R: I have been taking The Pulpit Jan. 1936. Across these years I found much help in it, and have ise been provoked, and sometimes ly stirred. Few contributions have ed me more than the statements of Pearson ("Treasure in Earthen els," Oct. and Nov.) about the need ew ministers. One thing we preach- an do to help the situation is to the ministry in every way possi- I am therefore writing to offer a estion.

t The Pulpit devote a whole issue e Christian ministry, with sermons estimonials from some of our most ed and best-known pastors. This t encourage preachers to speak on ubject from their pulpits or in talks ung people.

part of my job is getting ministers, the going is hard. Please "come to Macedonia and help us."

H. W. BURDIN,
Superintendent.
ginaw Bay District,
ethodist Church,
troit Conference.

Likes Bazaars

R: Anent the article "Make ey and Kill your Church" (Nov.), t any dominie stick up for the ba- —not simply as moneymakers but for their stimulation of good fel- hip, originating and deepening of dships, expansion of the total ch ministry? Is it not possible to both these affairs and financial s of maximum results, if promo- for both is efficient? Many of my iest moments, much of my best stry, occurs when I appear at ba- and the like. The rest of you s can bemoan and denounce them our frustration. I would not be ut them even if we didn't need noney.

C. W. KIRKPATRICK.
ngregational Church,
les, Calif.

efense of Preachers

R: The article "The Preacher's by Orva Lee Ice (Dec.) prompts o inquire, Why disparage the her so much and so often? It is someone with courage wrote about od qualities of preachers.

ave been in the active ministry 1926, and in that time I recall ing only one or two men who be considered lazy. Most of the ters that I know put in long hours ch longer than those who com- about them. . . . I have not met us preacher in the last 20 years, in the so-called holiness groups. The great majority of ministers are honest, hard-working men, trying their best to know God, to understand themselves and to know their people and help them.

WARREN E. MESLER,
Main Street Baptist Chur[illegible],
Newport, Vt.

Tithing

SIR: I am amazed that you published "The Tithe Rediscovered" by Hoover Rupert (Nov.). It is not based on Scripture, but is a fanciful and distorted view of the subject. Tithing was never intended to be "rediscovered"; it met its purpose and fulfillment at the cross and in the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem. Moreover, it applied only to the Jews, who were under the law, never to Gentiles (Rom. 2:14).

J. M. E. STRANGER,
Minneapolis, Minn.

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